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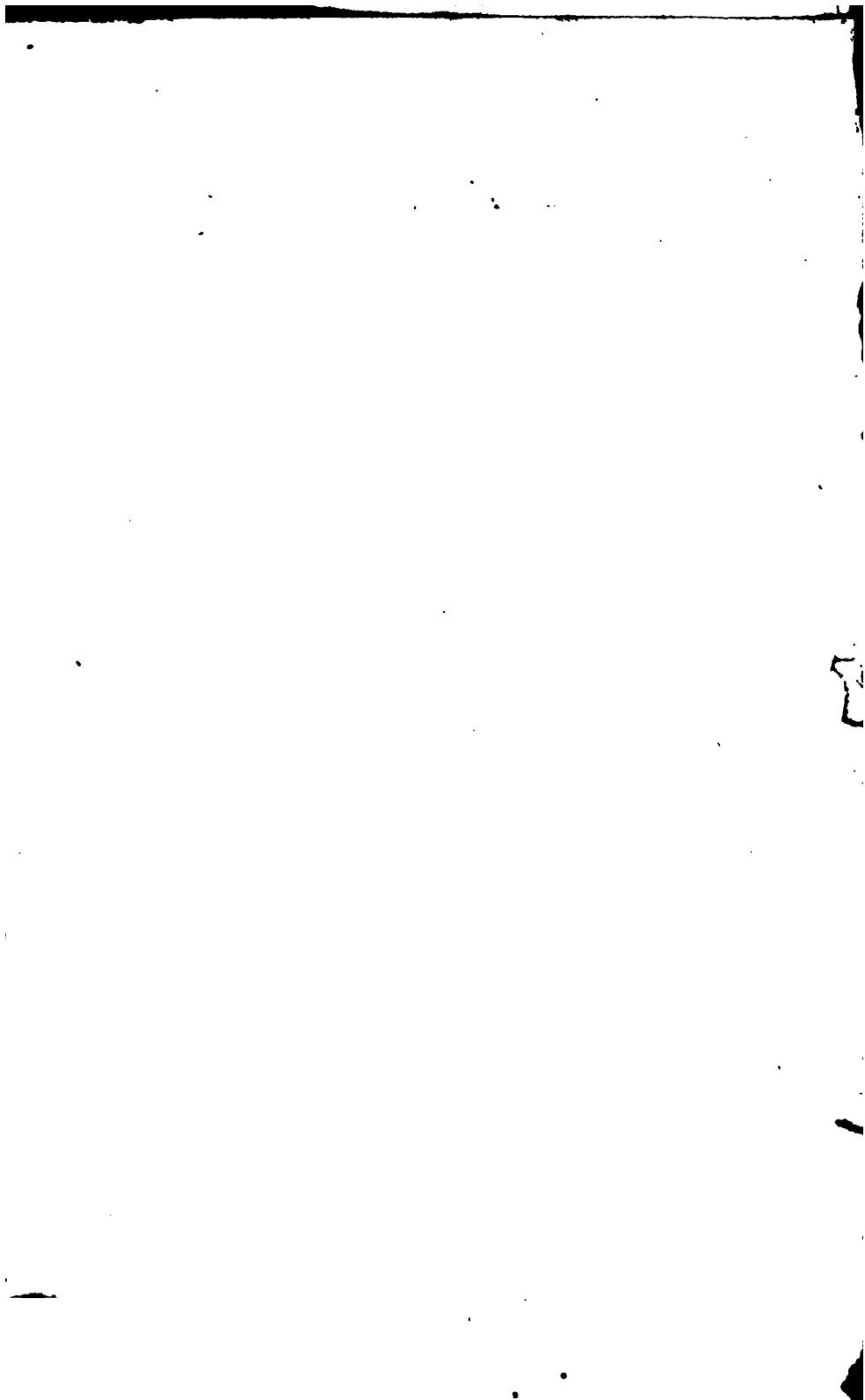
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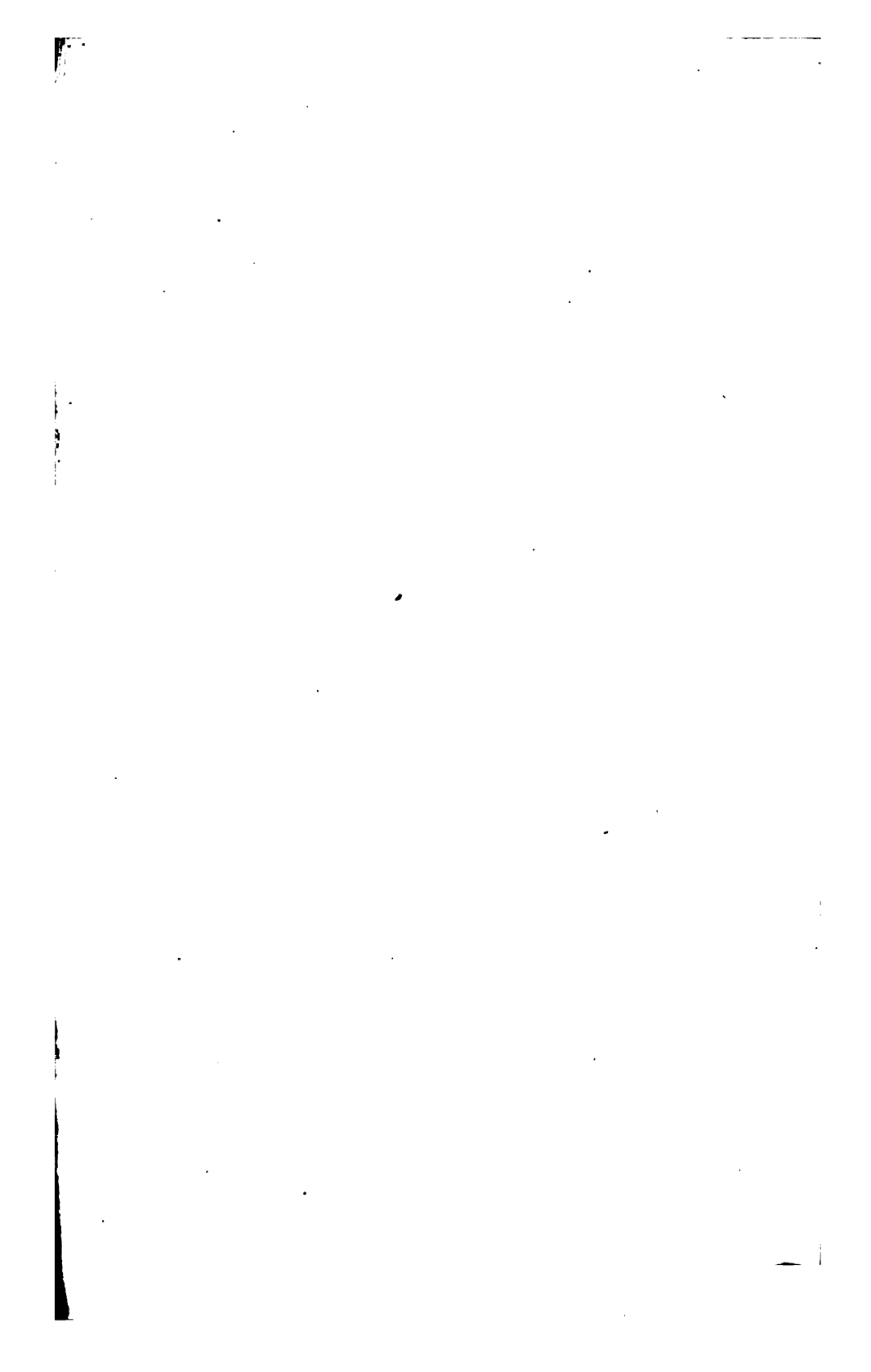
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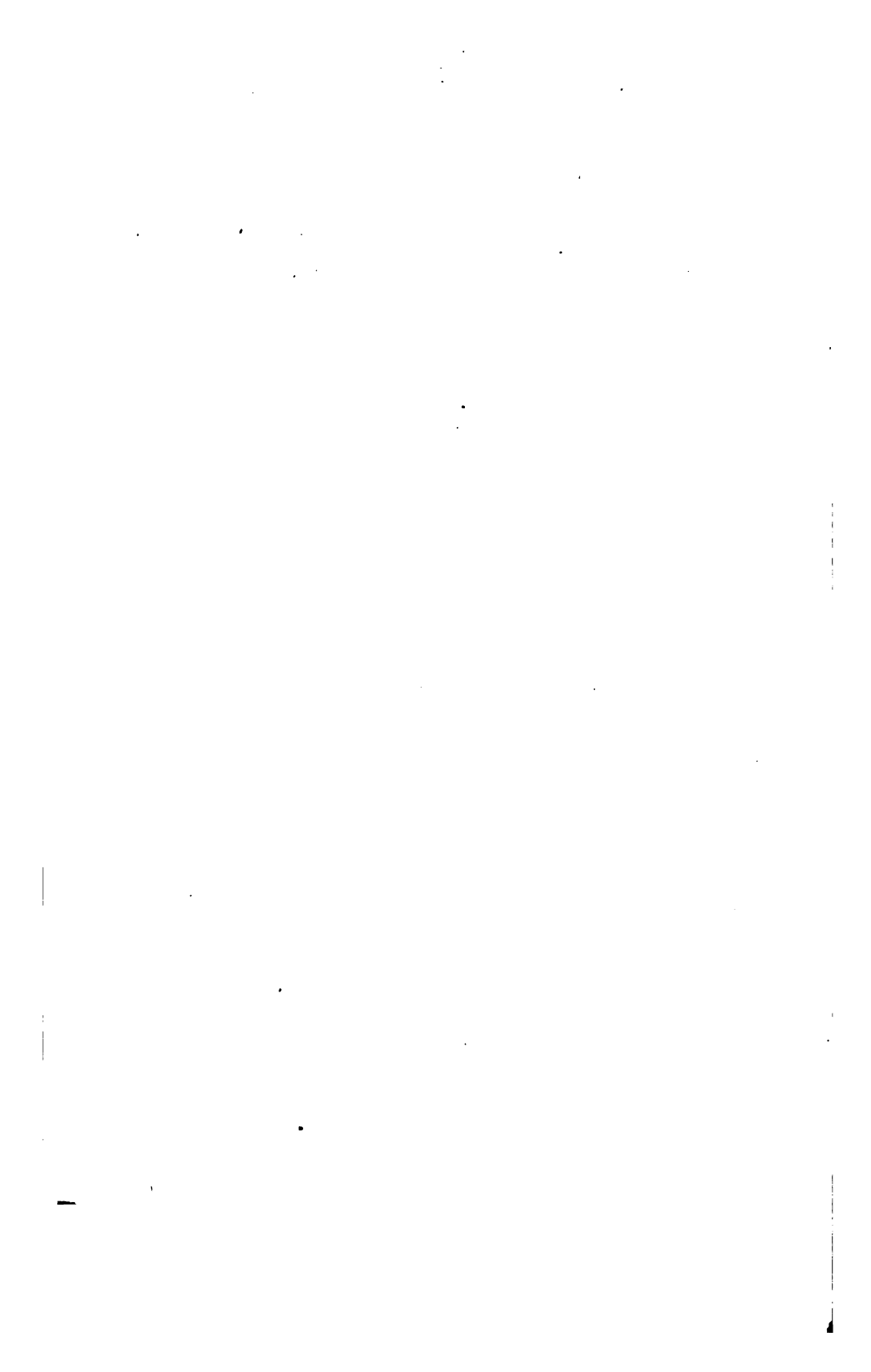
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John G. Atterbury







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116 p.

A
SHORT AND PLAIN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT,
WITH
DEVOTIONAL
AND
PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS,
FOR THE
USE OF FAMILIES.

BY THE LATE
REVEREND JOB ORTON, S.T.P.

PUBLISHED FROM THE AUTHOR'S MANUSCRIPTS,
BY ROBERT GENTLEMAN.

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM THE SECOND LONDON EDITION.

VOL. I.

CHARLESTOWN:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY SAMUEL ETHERIDGE.
1805.

CONTENTS.

GENESIS. EXODUS. LEVITICUS.



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gift
Tappan Presb. Assoc.
1-9-1932

TO THE PUBLIC.

THE late reverend, pious and judicious Mr. JOB ORTON, had greatly set his heart upon the publication of a short Exposition on the Old Testament, with practical Reflections subjoined to each chapter, somewhat similar to Dr. DODDRIDGE's Family Expositor. Materials for these Reflections he thought of furnishing from his own notes, which he wrote at the close of his Expositions on the bible, and made a part of his public services for twenty years; together with such as he wrote after Dr. DODDRIDGE, when he expounded in the family.

THIS design Mr. ORTON communicated to me above ten years ago, when he earnestly importuned me to undertake the execution of it, from a strong persuasion of its acceptableness and usefulness. After maturely considering the matter, I consented to make a trial, and he sent me the valuable materials. I entered on the work with pleasure, from a conviction of its utility, and the great want of a concise, practical Exposition on the Old Testament Scriptures, and had made some progress

in it. But having such other engagements as rendered it impossible for me to proceed in this great work with such dispatch as to finish it in any reasonable time, I at length determined to resign it with all my materials, into the hands of my worthy friend, Mr. GENTLEMAN, who, on various accounts, appeared to me the fittest person I knew to execute the design of the worthy projector. It affords me great satisfaction that he has undertaken it, and I heartily wish him encouragement and success from the countenance of the public and the blessing of God.

SAMUEL PALMER.

HACKNEY, JAN. 1787.

PREFACE.

THE Public will naturally expect some further account of the following work, than is contained in the preceding address.

To afford them information on this head, they will be pleased to observe, that it was drawn up by Mr. ORTON for the pulpit, and delivered by him at *Sbrewsbury*, in the former part of the morning service, during a period of more than twenty one years; his first Exposition being delivered *June 16, 1744*, and the last on his birth day, *September 15, 1765*. He prepared materials for this work in an interleaved bible, as they occurred at different times to his thoughts, or were collected from the writings of others, particularly the expositors whose names he entered at the beginning of it as below.* From these materials he wrote his copy for the pulpit in very neat short hand, referring by figures to each verse to which the exposition belonged, and added at the end of each chapter his devotional or practical reflections. This is the copy which is now transcribed and published.

THAT the author intended this work should be published, appears from the Rev. Mr. PALMER's address to the public, and is confirmed by the following extract from a letter to a respectable clergyman of the church of England;

Nov. 20, 1777.

—“ I fear the plan proposed for printing my practical remarks, &c. will not be executed; I wish it may; but I can do nothing at it myself, and the person from

* A. A. Assembly's Annot.
A. Ainsworth
C. Calvin's Notes
Cl. Clark's Annot.
Cra. Cradock
D. D. Doddridge's MSS.
written in Clark's Bible
De. Delany
Di. Diodati
Gr. Grotius
H. Henry's Expos.
J. A. Jewish Antiq.

J. T. Junius et Tremel.
Le. Leigh's Crit. Sacra.
Li. Lightfoot
N. T. Essay toward a N. Tran.
Pa. Patrick and Lowth
P. A. Pool's Annot.
P. S. Pool's Synops. Crit.
Pr. Prideaux
T. Trapp
T. C. Taylor's Heb. Concord.
U. H. Universal Hist.

Alios libros ut Judex lego, hunc ut Judicem.

whom I hoped for the execution of the design will not, I fear, attempt it, though he hath strength and ability of body and mind to do it soon, and do it well. I must leave it to Providence, and those who may come after me."

THE Editor remembers asking Mr. ORTON, whether he would wish the Reflections to be printed like Dr. DODDRIDGE's, without the distinction of figures, or to have the figures retained? He answered, that he preferred the figures, as they called the attention and helped the memory.

It appears, that in the latter part of his life, he wished to have CLARK's bible published, with his own practical Reflections added to each chapter, in the manner of DODDRIDGE's Family Expositor. This would certainly have been a much easier work for an Editor than the present mode; but I apprehend, for many obvious reasons, not so useful, nor so acceptable to the public.

HAD the work received the finishing hand of the author, or been published under his own inspection, it would, no doubt, have been more complete; some things would probably have been left out, and others added. I have faithfully transcribed what Mr. ORTON has written, excepting in some few instances where a sentence occurred which was too local or familiar, or had too peculiar a reference to any denomination of christians, and which, I verily believe, the author would have altered.

My great business has been, to connect the text and exposition together; to fill up the sentences where they were deficient, and to correct any small mistakes where I have discovered them. I have added a few notes from Dr. KENNICOTT and other modern writers, carefully distinguishing such by the name of their author, or the editor.

THE attentive reader will perceive that the work is not uniformly a paraphrase, but has criticisms and other remarks (frequently taken from CLARK's Annotations) intermingled. It was at first, my design to let all these

stand connected with the text, in the places to which they belonged ; but I soon found this would very much interrupt the reading, and swell the work beyond the bounds proposed. I have, therefore, by the advice of several respectable friends, put many of these into notes at the bottom of the page.

THOUGH the first volume does not take in so much of the bible as might have been expected, yet it contains about a sixth part of the whole work ; Mr. ORTON having been more diffuse in the former part of it, and more concise in the latter ; which will be found to be executed in a manner superior to the former, as might be expected from the author's increasing knowledge.

IT is hoped the critical reader will not be wholly disappointed in the work before him ; but let it be remembered, that it was designed by the author, to be *a short and plain Exposition for the use of Families and private christians* : a consideration, which has certainly prevented the addition of many criticisms and observations, which might have been agreeable to many readers, but would have swelled the work, increased the expense, and been contrary to its principal design : and, as the pious and learned Bp. WILSON observes,* “ Criticisms, finding out the meaning of difficult places, &c. are not so edifying, as establishing the heart with practical truths.” Mr. ORTON used to say, that “ Expositions should be adapted to tradesmen and farmers, to women, children and servants, as these were the persons who had most need of them, and generally made most use of them.”

THE Reflections, which are drawn from the leading circumstances in each chapter, are admirably adapted to practical purposes, and have as much variety as could be expected ; yet, as they were drawn up during a course of so many years, it may reasonably be supposed there will sometimes occur a similarity of thought, or even

* Preamble to Wilson's Bible.

expression, but this is no real blemish. We need the same important and practical truths often inculcated on ourselves and families ; *line upon line, and precept upon precept* ; but whoever brings with him a pious and devotional spirit, will no doubt find it improved by a serious perusal of them.

THE sacred text is printed in roman letters, and corrected from the valuable edition of the Bible published at *Oxford* in the year 1772 ; what is in italics in that edition, is here put into brackets, and the italics are entirely confined to the exposition : so that every one may easily distinguish the sacred text from the exposition, and read the former, if he chooses it, without the latter. The paragraphs are divided according to Bp. WILSON's very elegant edition of the bible.

IF my life and health should be continued to finish this work, and it should meet with the favourable regards of the public, and be useful to families and private christians, I shall have great reason to bow my knees in thankful acknowledgments to that Providence which hath made me an instrument of bringing it forward to the world, and which remarkably preserved the manuscript copy, when by a singular circumstance it was very near being destroyed.

I HAVE only to add my earnest prayers that a divine blessing may attend this work ; and, in order to this, I devoutly wish, that " while we peruse the writings of others, with a design to form a judgment concerning them, we may read the word of God, as our supreme and decisive Judge."*

R. GENTLEMAN.

KIDDERMINSTER, May, 1788.

* See the latin motto, page v.

The First Book of MOSES,

CALLED,

G E N E S I S.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS is, undoubtedly, the most ancient book in the world. It is almost universally agreed, that the author of this and the four following books, commonly called the Pentateuch, was MOSES; a man of a very extraordinary character, who was educated in the court of an Egyptian prince, and acquainted with all the branches of learning taught in the schools of Egypt.

Considering how long the Patriarchs lived, the history of facts which he relates came down to him through so few hands, as to leave no room to suspect their authenticity. On these accounts, this book claims peculiar attention, separate from the consideration of the writer's being under the influence of the Holy Spirit, without which, the true history of the creation could never have been known.

This book, though doubtless intended for the general information of mankind, seems to have been written more particularly for the instruction and advantage of the Jewish people; to prevent their complying with the idolatry of other nations, and preserve their entire obedience to the divine law; as well as to lower that pride and vanity which they were ever prone to indulge, on account of their being the peculiar people of God; in which views many things in it appear peculiarly beautiful.

Genesis, which is the name it bears in the Greek Septuagint translation, signifies generation;* and it is so called, because it relates the history of the generation or beginning of the heavens and the earth, the production of man, and the genealogies of the patriarchs.

This history begins about 4000 years before Christ, and contains a period of 2365 years, or thereabouts. The account of the creation, with which it commences, cannot reasonably be supposed, as it hath been by some, to relate to the universe at large, but, at most, to the solar system, and principally to our world. And though it be granted that the Bible was not intended to teach men natural philosophy, we must suppose, if we believe its divine inspiration, that what it relates is agreeable to truth and the nature of things.

* Matthew i. 1.

CHAP. I. Verse 1—25.

Contains the History of the Creation of the World, with its appendages and inhabitants, in the space of six days ; and of the work of each day.

- 1 **I**N the beginning God created the heaven and the earth ;
He made out of nothing, the common matter of which the
 2 *heavens and the earth were afterwards formed.* And the earth*
 was without form and void ; *without order, beauty, or furni-*
ture ; the stamina, or principles of future productions, being all
blended together ; and darkness [was] upon the face of the
deep waters which surrounded the solid mass, occasioned by the
thick vapours which rested upon them. And the Spirit of God,
or his infinite wisdom and power, moved upon the face of the
waters, made a violent agitation in order to expel those vapours,
and separate the fluid and solid matter, of which, together
with luminous and fiery particles, this chaos seems to have been
 3 *compounded. And God said, Let there be light : and there*
 was light ; *the gross particles were dispelled, and the dark*
 4 *earth was illuminated.† And God saw the light, that [it was]*
 good ; *agreeable to his great design : and God equally divided*
the light from the darkness, by giving the earth its diurnal mo-
 5 *tion. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he call-*
ed Night, that is, he appointed they should be so called. And
the evening and the morning were the first day.‡
 6 And God said, Let there be a firmament, *an expansion or*
atmosphere, in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the
 7 *waters in the clouds, from the waters upon the earth. And*
accordingly God made the firmament, and divided the waters
which [were] under the firmament, and designed for seas and
ivers, from the waters which [were] above the firmament, in
the clouds ; and it was so ; part of the waters ascended in va-
 8 *pours into the air. And God called the firmament Heaven ;*
including the space where the birds fly, the clouds gather, and
the stars appear to move. And the evening and the morning
were the second day.
 9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven, *which at*
first equally overspread the earth, be gathered together unto
one place, and be kept within their appointed channels ; and let
the dry [land] appear in continents and islands : and it was so

* Here the agency of the blessed God is asserted in the formation of all things : and in the New Testament we are told, he made all things by Jesus Christ, *John* i. 7. *Eph.* iii. 9. *Heb.* i. 10. Philosophers have had great debates about the formation of the world ; some asserting its eternity, others forming the most ridiculous notions of its being made by chance, or a concourse of atoms : but this first verse of our Bible clears up all the difficulty.

† Some suppose, that the fiery particles which contained light and heat, were separated from the rest of the mass, and collected into distinct bodies or globes of light, which moved round and caused a kind of day to some parts of the earth, while other parts were in darkness. But if we suppose that the Sun was first created, then the earth was illuminated by the Sun's rays. *Longinus* mentions this verse as an instance of the true sublime.

‡ The evening is mentioned first, because the Jewish sacred days begin from the evening.

- 10 *as God commanded.* (*Psaln civ. 5—8.*) And God called the dry [land] Earth ; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas : and God saw that [it was] good. *This clause is not added to the second day's work, because the work which was then begun (the separation of the waters) was not perfected till now.** And God said, Let the earth *receive power* to bring forth *tender grass itself, without being sown,* the herb yielding seed, [and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, *its own peculiar kind, whose seed [is] in itself, upon the earth, so that it shall propagate its own species :* and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, [and] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed [was] in itself, after his kind : and God saw that [it was] good ; *every tree and plant was adapted to answer some useful purpose.*
- 13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.
- 14 And God said, Let there be lights, *luminous bodies appearing in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night ; and let them be for signs, or marks of distinction between one portion of time and another, and for seasons, to produce and distinguish spring and summer, and autumn and winter, and for days, and years ; by their several motions, to make the days longer and shorter ; to distinguish between day and night, month and month, year and year ; and to show how to compute time accordingly :* And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth : and it was so. And God made, *or rather, Now God had made,* two great lights ; the greater light, *the sun,* to rule the day, and the lesser light *the moon,* to rule the night, [he made] the stars also.† And God *now* set them, *caused them to appear,* in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,‡
- 18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness : and God saw that [it was] good.
- 19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.
- 20 And God said, Let the waters, *together with the earth,* bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl [that] may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales,|| and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind : and God saw
- 22 that [it was] good. And God blessed them *all,* saying, *I bestow this blessing or power upon you to multiply your kind, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let*
- 23 *fowl multiply in the earth.* And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth bring

* Dr. Kennicott observes that the words are found in the Greek version at n. 8. *Edit.*

† The moon is mentioned first, to denote its peculiar usefulness to us above the other planets.

‡ Mr. Whiston well observes, Moses seems to have given an account of things as they would have appeared to an observing spectator, had such an one been here upon earth during the creation: when the Sun, on his first appearing, would seem to have been at that instant created. *Whiston's Theory, pref. p. 40.*

|| The original word is often rendered *dragons*, and *crocodiles*; see *Ezek. xlii. 3—xxvii. 1.* But here it seems to be put for large fish in general. *Edit.*

forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, *for the use of man*, and the creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his
 25 kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind : and God saw that [it was] good.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us adore the infinite majesty of God, as displayed in all his works, both in heaven and on earth. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all those who have pleasure therein.* What can we see but displays of power and wisdom in all the works of his hands ! What are the nicest, or the greatest performances of human skill, when compared with His, who is *wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working !* The meanest animal, the least vegetable or insensible being, declares his eternal power and Godhead. What skill, beauty, and harmony appear in all his works ! What reason have we after such a survey as this chapter affords, to adopt the devout rapture of David, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom thou hast made them all !*

2. Let us be daily sensible of the divine goodness in all the works of his hands ; that he hath provided so richly, not only for the support, but the comfort of all his creatures, and their agreeable entertainment. That he hath given the vegetable world, in particular, such beauty and grandeur. The earth is full of his riches ; so is the great and wide sea. All his works praise him ; and his rational creatures, especially, should bless his holy name. They alone are capable of admiring his works, and they should constantly do so.

3. We learn to use all the creatures for the honour of that God by whom they were made. They are not our own ; are not produced by our wisdom or power. Let us use them as the creatures of God. We are stewards of his manifold gifts, therefore let us not abuse them ; let none make unnecessary waste of them, or tyrannize over the brute creation, over which God hath given us dominion. A merciful man is merciful to beasts and insects. Every degree of cruelty is unworthy a rational creature. Let us set God, the great creator of all, continually before us, and seriously consider what use of these things will be most pleasing to him, and advantageous to ourselves ; that *whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to the glory of God, in the name of Jesus Christ.* Amen.

CHAP. I. 26, to the end. CHAP. II. 1—3.

Of the creation of man, and the institution of the sabbath. God having finished the inanimate and brutal creation, proceeds to the nobler production of man ; and here, to add dignity and solemnity to this, his last and greatest work, He calls a council and advises ; not to signify any doubt, deliberation, or want of skill or power in himself, but to show the dignity of the creature he was to form, and the amazing wisdom of the product.

- 26 **A**ND God said, *speaking to his son, or spirit, or both, or his attendant angels,* Let us make man in our image, a reasonable being, after our likeness in moral perfections : and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, with its various productions, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, so as to use them for their pleasure and benefit. So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him ; *this is repeated as worthy peculiar attention ;* male and female created he them. *Both were made this day, though the manner of the woman's creation is more fully related, ch. ii. 18, &c.* And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, dress and manage it, so as to make it fruitful ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth, *which are designed to subserve the wants and conveniences of mankind.*
- 29 And God further said to them, Behold, I have given you likewise every herb bearing seed, which [is] upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which [is] the fruit of a tree yielding seed ; to you it shall be for meat.* And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for meat : and it was so till after the fall, when beasts and birds of prey, and fishes, did eat and devour one another. And on the conclusion of the whole, on a survey of his works, God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good ; *exactly fitted for the use and end for which they were designed ; and adorned with such perfections as were suitable to their natures ; and all conducing to the glory of God.* And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.
- 1 CHAP. II. Thus, as before related, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, *their ornaments and apparatus.*
- 2 And on the seventh day God had ended his work which he had made ;† and he rested on the seventh day from all his

* Herbs are only mentioned ; animal food not being allowed, as some think, before the flood, at least not till after the fall. See *Cradock's History of the Old Testament*, p. 4, 5.

† Dr. Kennicott observes, that the Samaritan text with the Greek and Syriac versions read, God ended his work on the sixth day.

work which he had made ;* *he ceased from the work of creation, but not of providence, to teach us to rest from our work on*
 3 *that day.* And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ;† *set it apart as sacred in memory of the creation of the world ; as a day in which he is to be blessed and praised, and in which he communicates blessings to his pious worshippers : because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made, or brought to perfection.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us remember and acknowledge the dignity of our natures. Attend to these words, *Let us make man.* God gives notice to those about him of the great business he was going to do ; it was something worthy of their highest regard ; the last and best of his creating work here below. We are all *fearfully and wonderfully made.* All the parts of our body are an amazing instance of his power and skill ; but the breath of life, the living soul, the intelligent and immortal spirit, by which we are capable of understanding and reasoning, looking backward to past ages, and forward to eternity ; by which we are able to inquire after God our maker, and pay him a reasonable service ; this is the crown of all ; herein *he hath made us wiser than the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, and but a little lower than the angels.* It is when man is taken in comparison with other things, with all the lower creation, that his dignity and excellency appear. Let us love that God who hath raised this curious frame ; who is the father of our spirits, and hath crowned us with such glory and honour. Let us be thankful for any remains of His image which we still bear ; and act as becometh those who were made for God, and like him.

2. Let us depend on God to begin and perfect the new creation. Thanks be to him, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, that he hath shined upon us in the face of his dear Son, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. He, who is the author of nature, is the God of all grace ; and the day is approaching, when he will make all things new. The same power that produced nature at first, must change our corrupt hearts and sinful inclinations, and create us anew in Christ Jesus to good works. Let us maintain a humble dependence upon him, to begin and carry on his new and nobler creation in our own souls and the souls of others. His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is his ear heavy that it cannot hear : if he speak the word, it shall be done. Let us rely upon his almighty power to make our souls perfect in holiness ; to complete our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies, that we may be fit for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

* He ceased to create, he proceeded no further. Resting implies bodily fatigue or weariness ; but the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is he weary.

† As Adam and Eve were created at the close of the sixth day, this would be the first whole day of their life, the first of their week, and God appointed it to be a sabbath or holy day ; and there is no doubt but they and their descendants observed it as such. *Edith.*

3. Let us bless God for the institution of the sabbath, which is so well calculated to begin and carry on this good work in our souls, and maintain a sense of God and his goodness in the world. Let us be thankful if we have found the advantage of it, as thousands in all ages have done. If God thought fit to enjoin it on man in a state of innocence, that he might converse with God in holy duties and exercises, much more fit is it for us in our corrupt state; when we have so many hindrances in religion, so many difficulties to grapple with, temptations to overcome, and duties to perform. Let us call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable. On that day let us rest from all our common works, and remember to keep it holy; employing it in devout meditations on the wisdom, power, and goodness of God in creation, and the still brighter and nobler scenes which the glorious gospel of the blessed God opens upon us.

CHAP. II. 4, to the end.

A more particular account of some things mentioned before; the formation of Adam and Eve; the forbidden fruit; and the institution of marriage.

- 4 **T**HESE things already related [are] a true account of the generations, or origin, of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day or time that the LORD God, or JEHOVAH,* made the earth and the heavens.
- 5 And we have here also an account of the formation of every plant of the field, before it was produced by any virtue in the earth, and of every herb of the field before it grew: every plant and herb being created in a state of maturity: for the LORD God had not as yet caused it to rain upon the earth, and [there was] not a man to till the ground. So that the origin of these things must be ascribed to God's power alone,
- 6 seeing there was no natural cause to produce them. But after the earth was stored with vegetables, there went up a mist from the earth, and this, falling down upon it again, watered the whole face of the ground.
- 7 And the LORD God with exquisite art formed the body of man [of] the dust of the ground,† and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; infused into his lifeless body a living soul, which quickened it, and discovered itself by the breath in his nostrils.‡ And man became a living soul, a more excellent being than any other creature here below.

* Here the name JEHOVAH is first used: it signifies, He that was, and is, and is to come; the necessary self-existent Being. It is commonly rendered Lord in our Bible, and is distinguished by capital letters; but the word Lord by no means expresses the force of the original, which should have been retained.

† Whence Adam is called the earthy man, 1 Cor. xv. 47, to which agrees the Hebrew word here rendered formed, which is different from that used with reference to the other creatures. It refers to potters who make vessels of clay; and seems to denote the peculiar care and skill of the Almighty in the formation of the human body.

‡ It is observable, that man's body and soul were made distinct, (which they were not in other creatures,) to show that his soul is of a different original from the body.

- 8 And the LORD God, *having thus made a rational creature, does not turn him out into a barren world, but provides comfortably both for the support of his body, and the entertainment of his mind ; and therefore he had planted a garden eastward of Judea, in the country of Eden ; and there he put the man*
- 9 *whom he had formed. And out of the ground of that garden made the LORD God to grow every kind of tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ; the tree of life so called, because it was a natural means of preserving man's life, and a pledge of its continuance ; he had also planted in the midst of the garden, and there he had likewise planted the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the eating of which (being forbidden) would give him experimentally to know the difference between moral good and evil.*
- 10 And a river went out of *the land of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted, and became into four*
- 11 *heads, or principal streams.* The name of the first [is] Pison : that [is] it which compasseth, or winds along, the whole*
- 12 *land of Havilah, where [there is] gold in great plenty ; And the gold of that land [is] remarkably good : there [is] also*
- 13 *bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river [is] Gihon : the same [is] it that compasseth or winds*
- 14 *along, the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river [is] Hiddekel, or Tygris : that [is] it which goeth toward the east of, or before, Assyria. And the fourth river [is] Euphrates itself.*
- 15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it *for his health and pleasure.*
- 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, *including the*
- 17 *woman also, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat : but with this single limitation, that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for*
- 18 *in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, become liable to all sorts of evils, both in this world and the other, which shall immediately begin to seize upon thee.*
- 18 And the LORD God said, *[It is] not good that the man, who is a social being, should be alone ; I will therefore make him an help meet for him ; suitable to his nature, acceptable to the*
- 19 *person, and useful upon all occasions. Now the manner of her creation was as different from that of the other creatures as the*
- 20 *end for which she was made. And out of the ground and waters the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air ; and he brought [them] unto Adam to see what he would call them : and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that [was] the name thereof by which it was*
- 20 *known to posterity. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field, according*

* The situation of Paradise, answering to this description, is what geographers are divided about. Most probably as *Calvin* and others suppose, it was in *Chaldea*, at the confluence of the *Tygris* and the *Euphrates*. These two rivers were above, with respect to the course of the waters ; and the other two below, *viz.* the *Pison* and the *Gihon*, which names have long been disused.

to their respective natures ; but for Adam there was not found among all the tribes of creatures, one that was an help meet for him ; so that it was necessary that one should be created on purpose.

- 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept : and during his state of insensibility he took one
22 of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof ; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from the man, made he into a woman, and brought her unto the man, who now awoke, and he gave her to him as his wife ; acquainting him with the
23 manner of her creation. And Adam, receiving her with gratitude and joy, said, This [is] now a fit companion for me, being bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh : she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. And God acquainted Adam with the great law of matrimony now instituted, saying, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his
24 mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they two* shall be one flesh ; most inseparably united during life, and have as intimate communion as if they were but one person. This condemns
25 both polygamy and divorce. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and continued so as long as they were innocent ; and by reason of their innocence they were not ashamed ; as there was neither deformity in their bodies, nor guilt, the cause of shame, in their souls.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E are here called upon to remember the celestial origin of the soul ; it did not spring from the dust, it was not formed by our parents, but is the breath of God. *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.* Let us highly prize these precious and immortal souls ; study their improvement in knowledge and holiness ; and never debase them by any low or mean pursuits : but let them daily aspire toward the world from which they came, and the God by whom they were infused.

2. Let us admire the plentiful provision God hath made for man, and the equity of that covenant under which he was placed. How wisely and kindly hath God contrived for the delight of his creatures ! He is to be owned and honoured in all. It is a remarkable expression in v. 5, *the LORD God*, that is, JEROVAN, *had not yet caused it to rain on the earth.* It is God alone that giveth rain from heaven, and maketh the earth fruitful ; he greatly enricheth it with the river of God, which is full of water : he giveth us all things richly to enjoy. God saw good to lay on man a small restraint, to let him know he was a servant and a dependent, not an absolute proprietor. If any should ask, why *this* should be made the test of obedience, rather than a moral precept ; the reason is plain ; he could not be guilty of many vices,

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* See *Matt.* xix. 5. *Mark* x. 7. *1 Cor.* vi. 16. *Eph.* v. 13.

he had no temptation to others ; so that his virtue was to be tried by his having a proper temptation to transgress. The demand of abstinence from one tree, was very reasonable, when God had given him all things else.

3. Let us be very thankful for the happiness of social life ; that God hath given us social natures, and fitted us for social pleasures and entertainments : that he hath formed us capable of those tender affections, which are an honour instead of a disgrace to human nature, and the source of that endearing friendship which but one relation will admit of. The wisdom and goodness of God are to be adored in providing so suitable and agreeable a companion for his new formed creature, to enliven even paradise itself ; for continuing in the breasts of his descendants of both sexes their mutual tenderness for each other ; and for appointing and instituting the conjugal relation, as what he saw would be for the comfort and advantage of his creatures, as well as necessary for the regular and orderly continuance of them.

4. Let the circumstances attending the production of the woman, be a lesson to both sexes how to behave one to another. *Adam*, says the Apostle, *was first formed, then Eve* ; which he urges as an argument for the cheerful subjection of the woman. *1 Tim. ii. 13.* and in another place he observes, the woman was made for the man, and out of the man ; which he urges to the same purpose. We learn from hence, the duty of men to love their wives, *v. 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.* This is a strong argument against having more wives than one ; and also against divorces, which are so shamefully common in the present day. In this view it is urged by our Lord, *Matt. xix. 5.* God had, as the prophet Malachi observes, the residue of the spirit, and could have created more women than one, but he did not. The circumstance of the woman's creation out of the man, was no doubt intended to be a moral lesson that men should love their wives, since they are bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, and are designed for their comfort, and to be helps meet for them. In a word, marriage is honourable in all ; it is the wise and gracious appointment of God ; and it should be the concern of all who are entered, or may enter into that relation, to behave to each other with that forbearance and kindness, that respect and concern for each other's welfare, which alone can make their state comfortable here, and will, if they are truly religious, lay a foundation for a purer, more lasting, yea, an eternal friendship, in the other world.

CHAP. III.

This is one of the most difficult and the most melancholy chapters in the whole bible. Before this all was very good ; here all is very bad. It contains an account of our first parents' fall, the cause, and the consequence of it. The origin of evil hath always been a subject of controversy with speculative men, and probably will always be attended with some difficulties, which in the present world cannot be solved ; but the scripture gives such an account of the matter, as ought to satisfy us, namely, that it was in consequence of the temptation of some subtil and malignant being. What that being was, and how he presented his temptations, we are here informed.

- 1 **N**OW the serpent, that is, the Devil or Satan, under the form of a serpent, was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he, being set upon the ruin of the human race, said unto the woman, whom he found alone, and whose attention he had probably gained by various wiles and appearances of intelligence, under the form of a fine, beautiful serpent, walking erect, and uncommonly attentive to her : having thus prepared the way, he said, Yea, hath God indeed said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ? Sure it cannot possibly be, that God, who is the supreme good and your most bountiful benefactor, should
- 2 in good earnest forbid you the use of this tree. And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of all
- 3 the other trees of the garden : But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath certainly said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, in order
- 4 to the eating of it, lest ye die.* And the serpent said unto the woman, certainly you must be mistaken ; God's words may
- 5 have some other meaning ; ye shall not surely die : For God knows it will be very profitable for you ; and therefore it is not likely that He, being so good, should absolutely forbid it you : God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall instantly be opened, and ye shall be as gods, or as God himself, knowing good and evil ; you shall attain such a large, yea, divine measure of knowledge, that in comparison thereof your present knowledge is but blindness.
- 6 And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, beyond the rest of the trees, and a tree to be desired, from this account of it, to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and then gave some of it also unto her husband with her ; and he
- 7 did eat likewise through her persuasion. And immediately the eyes of them both were opened, in a sense far different from

* See Milton's account of this matter, which I think is the most clear, easy, and probable of any I have met with. *Par. Lost. B. ix. l. 494. &c.*

what the tempter had pretended, and then they knew that they [were] naked ; and experienced a sense of shame and the need of covering, so that they sewed fig leaves together, and made
 8 *themselves aprons, or girdles. And they heard the voice of the LORD God, a sound from the majestic presence or glory of JEHOVAH, as it were walking in the garden in the cool of the day, or evening, and seeming to approach them : and Adam and his wife, through a sense of guilt and fear of punishment, hid themselves from the awful symbol of the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*

- 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, *with a terrible emphasis, to bring him to confession, Where*
 10 *[art] thou ? Why dost thou seek concealment ? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid ; because I had found that I [was] naked ; and therefore I hid myself. And he further interrogated Adam and said, Who told thee that thou [wast] naked ? and that thou needest on that account to be ashamed ? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat ? And the man, desirous to excuse himself, ungratefully said, The woman whom thou gavest [to be] with me, as an help meet, she gave me of the tree, and at her instigation I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What [is] this [that] thou hast done ? How heinous a transgression ! And the woman, being also desirous to extenuate her crime, said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*
 14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, *Because thou hast done this, thou [art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field : though the serpent was only the instrument here, yet he is cursed to show God's detestation of sin : upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life ; his wings and feet fell off ; and instead of feeding on plants and herbs, he took his food from the dust and licked in the*
 15 *dust with it : And I will put perpetual enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**
 16 Unto the woman he said, *she being first in the transgression, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and, or rather, in thy conception, or pregnancy ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth*

* This is true in a literal sense : there is an irreconcilable enmity between mankind and serpents, and their attacks on each other are frequent. But Adam and Eve undoubtedly knew that it was an intelligent spirit who had seduced them ; and that this sentence was addressed to such a being. God designed to comfort Adam and Eve, under the dejection and grief in which he saw them involved, and therefore made them this promise. But where would be the comfort, if it were only to be taken in a literal sense, that Adam's children should sometimes kill serpents, and serpents should sometimes hurt them ? This looks like trifling, and must be poor comfort to a creature under the divine displeasure. Adam must be fallen indeed, fallen below common sense, to take comfort in that. *Thy seed and her seed* may therefore mean, as many think, the righteous and the wicked, or (which sense I much prefer) the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Messiah, the Captain of Salvation ; *He*, that eminent Person, shall bruise thy head, destroy thy power ; and thou shalt bruise his heel ; he shall receive some slight hurt in the contest ; which may refer to the sufferings the Messiah endured for our Salvation.

- children ; and thy desire [shall be] *subject* to thy husband *whom thou hast enticed*, and he shall rule over thee. And
- 17 unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, *rather than to thy own understanding, or to my precepts*, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it : *from henceforth* cursed [is] the ground for thy sake, *it shall no longer produce its fruits spontaneously as before ; in sorrow shalt thou eat the*
- 18 *produce* [of] it all the days of thy life ; Thorns also and thistles, *all manner of unprofitable hurtful weeds*, shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field *instead of those generous and delicious fruits of paradise which thou*
- 19 *hast hitherto fed upon* ; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, *with constant labour and vexation*, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken ; for dust
- 20 thou [art,] and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam, *sensible of the mercy mixed with judgment, and thankful that the sentence was not immediately executed*, called his wife's name Eve, *which signifies, life*, because she was *to be* the mother of all living.
- 21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God *show further favour, and taught them how to make coats of the skins of the beasts, and clothed them therewith*. And the Lord God
- 22 *said, in something of an ironical manner, to humble him more deeply*, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil : and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever, *or entertain the*
- 23 *hope of doing so* : Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, *into the wild and uncultivated country about it, to till the ground from whence he was taken*.
- 24 *But he lingered and was loth to depart ; So he drove out the man by violence, and Eve reluctantly followed ; and he placed at the east of, or, before the garden of Eden ministering Angels called Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned in their hands every way, to keep the way of the tree of life ; that the earthly paradise might not be regained, and that man might not expect immortality on earth.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us lament the offence and calamity of the human family in its first head. See what wretched work sin made in God's beautiful and orderly creation. We should be greatly grieved at this apostacy, which was such a dishonour to God, and brought such misery on mankind. We have reason to look back upon it with grief and shame, that man, though made upright, has thus come short of the glory of God, and rebelled against him. When labouring in the sweat of our brow, let us think of the evil of sin : when the daughters of Eve endure the

pains of pregnancy and the sorrows of childbearing, let them learn to hate sin. Let all our pains of body and depravity of mind lead our thoughts to this origin of evil ; and learn from the whole story, that *sin is the abominable thing which God's righteous soul hateth.*

2. Since we have fallen from God, let us return to him : there is no security or comfort but in this, whatever difficulties or mortifications may attend it. Let us be careful we do not cover our transgression, like Adam, (see *Job xxxi. 33.*) and flee from God ; but fly to him as the father of mercies. To endeavour to fly from him is vain ; for *there is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves.* But to return to him *in the new and living way which he hath appointed, Heb. x. 20.* and to confess and forsake our sins, is the only way to find mercy.

3. Let us own the justice of the sentence passed on man. We bear the image of Adam in our afflictions and death : we labour like him, and like him, return to the dust. Adam's sin was great and heinous, and being the first transgression, claimed a heavier punishment. God did his guilty creatures no wrong, he did but keep his own word. Let us humble ourselves under these mortifying circumstances of becoming a prey to sin, to affliction and death, and adore God, who exacts less than our iniquities, and the iniquities of our first parents deserved.

4. We should adore that mercy which pointed out the Lord Jesus Christ ; that God so graciously revived the drooping hearts of his fallen creatures by this early intimation of mercy, and provided so richly for the comfort of succeeding generations ; that, while feeling the effects of sin, they might look to Christ. By faith in this promise, the holy men of old bore up under their imperfections and distresses. We have particular reason to be thankful that Christ was manifested in the flesh ; that as the children whom he came to save were partakers of flesh and blood, he also partook of the same. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ ! This second man is the Lord from heaven, who restores those blessings which our first father lost, and brings greater and nobler along with him. Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift.

5. Let us long after the recovery of a better paradise by him. *As by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead ;* when he shall be raised, not only to another, but to a happier life. There is a nobler paradise above, where the tree of life ever flourishes in perpetual verdure and beauty ; where there is no serpent to deceive, no tempter to seduce ; from whence Satan is for ever banished, and where joy and glory spring fresh through immortal ages. In the mean time,

6. Let us pursue the holy war against Satan, under the banner of Christ, *who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.* He overcame him on earth, he triumphed over him on the cross. We must expect opposition from him ; he hath an enmity against the seed of the woman, and may bruise their

heel. But let us resist our great adversary. He was too hard for innocent man : his cunning is improved by long experience ; and we are less able to resist him ; but if we continue steadfast, we shall finally triumph, for he is a vanquished foe. Let us contend like those who know that they shall be *more than conquerors through him that hath loved us ; and do thou, O God of peace, bruise Satan under our feet shortly. Amen.*

CHAP. IV.

The former chapter contained an account of man's fall, this of his increase : it gives us the history of Cain and Abel ; of Cain's posterity ; of Lamech and his posterity ; and of Seth and his family.

- 1 **A**ND Adam knew Eve his wife ; and she conceived, and bare a son, whom she called Cain, and said, with great thankfulness and joy, I have gotten a man from the
- 2 LORD, as his gift and the fruit of his blessing. And she again, or afterwards, bare his brother, whom she called Abel, which signifies vanity. *She probably expected Cain to have been the Messiah, but found him to be of a wicked disposition ; and being disappointed, called this son, vanity, or disappointment.* And they were both brought up to labour, but of different kinds : Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the
- 3 ground. And in process of time, or every year, it came to pass, that Cain by the divine command brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD, called a sacrifice, Heb.
- 4 xi. 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, the fattest and the best. *This he offered with humility and faith, and he found his account in it.* And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering ; which he manifested by some visible token, (probably by fire from heaven,
- 5 consuming the sacrifice) so as that Cain discerned it : But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect, for want of faith and sincerity. And Cain was very wroth both with God and his brother, and his countenance fell ; he laid aside that cheerfulness and pleasantness, which argues well pleasedness ; and betrayed his anger and discontent by his sour, dejected, envious
- 6 looks. And the LORD said unto Cain, to bring him to a sense of his sin and repentance for it, Why art thou wroth ? and why is thy countenance fallen ? I am not guilty of any partiality.
- 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? and if thou doest not well, the punishment of thy sin lieth at the door, and like a furious beast is ready to seize thee. And though Abel is accepted before thee on account of his faith, yet he shall still show thee respect as his elder brother, and subject unto thee [shall be] his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

- 8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother concerning the different regard shewn to their respective offerings :* and it came to pass, when they were in the field together, that Cain in a fit of resentment rose up against Abel his brother, and
- 9 slew him. And on his return from the field the LORD said unto Cain, Where [is] Abel thy brother ? And so hardened was he in his sin, that he said, I know not : [Am] I my brother's
- 10 keeper ? didst thou ever give me any charge of him ? And he said again to Cain in an awful manner, What hast thou done ? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the
- 11 ground for vengeance. And it shall be avenged : even now [art] thou cursed from the earth, sentenced to a perpetual banishment from that part of it which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand, into a more barren country ; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength so freely as hitherto ; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth ; cast out from God's presence, and the society of thy kindred and acquaintance, and wandering from one country to another, by reason of thy trouble and perplexity of conscience.
- 12 And Cain said unto the LORD, my punishment [is] greater than I can bear ; or, my iniquity is greater than that it may be
- 13 forgiven. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, my native soil, where I have dwelt with my parents and kindred ; and from thy face shall I be hid ; I shall be always hiding myself from thee, skulking in holes and corners by reason of my guilty conscience ; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth ; and it shall come to pass, [that] every one that findeth me shall attempt to slay me as the public enemy of mankind, and as one devoted by thee to destruction.†
- 14 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore, to prevent this, I ordain, that whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him ; some visible token, (either the paley, or a ghastly look, or the like) to make him a living
- 15 monument of his wrath against murder.‡ And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, that is, the land of vagabonds, (so called on Cain's account) which lies on the east of Eden.
- 16 And Cain knew his wife, who accompanied him with others of his family ; and she conceived and bare Enoch : and after many years wandering, and having a numerous progeny, God

* Crenshaw's version is, *And Cain spake unto Abel his brother, Let us go forth: which words are found in the Samaritan Text.* See Kennicott's remarks.

† The world being now near one hundred and thirty years old, the inhabitants might be considerable. Whiston computes them at upwards of four thousand, others at a great deal more.

‡ A late ingenious author hath given the most natural sense of these words, which he-cause we may be rendered thus, *God appointed to Cain a sign or token, to assure him that no one should kill him.* So the word is rendered, Gen. ix. 12. *Shuckford's* Connect. Vol. i. p. 8. Edit.

- permitted him to settle, and he builded a city, and called the*
 18 *name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto*
Enoch was born Irad : and Irad begat Mehujael : and Me-
hujael begat Methusael : and Methusael begat Lamech.
 19 *And Lamech, who was one of wicked Cain's posterity, was*
the first who violated the original law of marriage by polygamy,
for he took unto him two wives : the name of the one [was]
Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. God was pleased to
tolerate this under the Old Testament ; but Christ, in Matthew
xix. 8. fully showed the evil of it, and restored marriage to its
 20 *first institution. And Adah bare Jabal : he was the father of*
such as dwell in tents, and [of such as have] cattle ; the first
inventor of tent making, and of the art of tending and ordering
 21 *cattle. And his brother's name [was] Jubal : he was the*
father of all such as handle the harp and organ, having invent-
ed some kind of musical instruments, and taught the use of
 22 *them. And Zillah, the other wife of Lamech, she also bare*
Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron,
that is, instruments for war or for husbandry : and the sister
of Tubalcain [was] Naamah, who, the Jews say, found out
 23 *the way of carding, spinning, and weaving wool. And Lamech*
said unto his wives, Adah, and Zillah, who seem to have been
afraid that, since weapons were grown so common, Lamech, who
was probably a man of a turbulent spirit, would be slain ; in
order to calm their fears he says, Hear my voice ; ye wives of
Lamech, hearken unto my speech, and be under no painful ap-
prehensions on my account : for do you imagine I have slain a
man to my own wounding, and a young man to my own hurt ?
 24 *No. If Cain therefore, who murdered his own brother for his*
piety, shall be avenged seven fold, truly Lamech seventy and
seven fold ; God will bring ten fold destruction on the man that
hurts me.

- Moses, having thus briefly mentioned Cain's posterity, returns*
 25 *to mention another branch of Adam's family. And Adam*
knew his wife again ; and she bare a son, and called his name
Seth, which signifies, appointed or substitute : For God, [said
she,] hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom
Cain slew, and who shall be the root of that holy family in which
 26 *the church shall be established. And to Seth, to him also, that is,*
to Seth himself, there was born a son ; and he called his name
Enos, that is, sorrowful ; to note the sadness of those times by
reason of the wickedness thereof : then began men to call upon
the name of the LORD, to separate themselves from the profane
society of the wicked, and to worship God in a more public,
solemn, and pure manner, than had been done by Cain and his
profane posterity. And here began the distinction of the sons of
God, and the sons and daughters of men.

^a The words are rendered by Bishop Lowth, *I have slain a man for having wounded me, and a young man for having bruised me.* Lowth's *Essecl.* p. 52.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T is reasonable that God should have our best, that he should be presented with our first and noblest sacrifices. He deserves it, he claims it. But let us remember,

2. That real piety is necessary to our acceptance with him. Abel's sacrifice was preferred, because he was humble and pious, and offered it in faith. If we are destitute of inward and real religion, God will turn away his ear from our prayer, and even our sacrifice will be an abomination to him : to vow, and not perform our vows, is to offer the sacrifice of fools. *If any man be a true worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth always, and him he accepts.*

3. See the danger of indulging malignant passions : Cain was wroth with God and his brother. He ought to have rejoiced that his brother's sacrifice was accepted, and to have grieved that his own was not. But his envy and anger preyed upon him, and hurried him on to commit this horrid murder. Let us guard against every sally of passion : ask ourselves when it begins to rise, as God doth Cain, "Why am I wroth? do I well to be angry?" Those who are of an hasty temper should learn caution by such a melancholy story as this. *Anger resteth in the bosom of fools only, and produces the most dismal effects.* Let us not suffer the least resentment to harbour in our bosom. We are shocked at Cain ; but remember, *every one that hateth his brother is a murderer.*

4. We are not to judge of good and evil by the present appearance of things. Righteous Abel was subject to wicked Cain. Abel was slain by his brother ; and why slew he him ? *Because his own works were evil, and his brother's good.* This good man's days soon came to an end ; but this providence was overruled to be an early intimation of the immortality of the soul, and the rewards of a future state. Wait till the day of retribution, and the scene will be changed ; all this regular confusion in the ways of God's providence will have a wise, a glorious, and a merciful end.

5. See here the terror of an evil conscience ; what a dreadful thing a distracted mind is ! See the fatal effects of sin. Cain was full of despairing thoughts, but showed nothing of humility, no hope of mercy. What dreadful hardness of heart must sin have produced, that after having seen God and conversed with him, he should continue impenitent. A wounded spirit is a terrible thing. To prevent it, let us guard against the ways of Cain ; and *herein let us exercise ourselves, to maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and man.*

6. How vain are all arts and sciences, and the ornaments of life, where real religion is wanting ! The descendants of Cain discovered several valuable and noble inventions ; but still they

themselves were wicked, and walked in his footsteps. These inventions were of the Lord, and these were their portion. A miserable portion indeed ! Let us choose our lot among God's servants, those who in sincerity call on his name. Let us love his worship, make religion the one thing needful ; then we may hope to enjoy peace of conscience, free from disquieting fears and alarms ; and shall at length obtain eternal redemption, through *that blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.*

CHAP. V.

The genealogy, age, and death of the patriarchs, from Adam unto Noah.

- 1 **T**HIS following [is] the book of the generations of Adam ; the history of Adam's creation, and the catalogue of his posterity till the flood, who were the progenitors of Christ. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God
- 2 made he him ; Male and female created he them ; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. *This repetition is intended to remind us what a glorious creature man was at first, and how shamefully he was fallen : it intimates, that Adam, which signifies, red earth,*
- 3 *was the proper name of the whole species.* And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and, after several other children, he begat [a son] in his own likeness, after his image ; *not the likeness of God, but of Adam ; yet he was a pious son, in opposition to others who were wicked ; a proper representation of his father, and well supplied the place of Abel ; and, agreeable to his wife's desire, he called his name Seth : And the*
- 4 days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred
- 5 years : and he begat other sons and daughters : And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years : and he died ; *so that the original threatening was literally executed, though at a very distant period.**
- 6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos :
- 7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven
- 8 years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years : and he died.
- 9 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan : And
- 10 Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen
- 11 years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years : And he died.
- 12 And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel :

* The extraordinary longevity of men in those first ages of the world, appears not at all incredible, considering how requisite this was for peopling the earth, and how probable it is that the human constitution was then proportionably strong.

- 13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred
 14 and forty years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years : and he died.
- 15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared :
 16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and
 17 thirty years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years : and he died.
- 18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch ; *who is mentioned with distinguished honour in the New Testament, Jude v. 14, as the seventh from Adam and*
 19 *a prophet of God :* And Jared lived after he begat Enoch
 20 eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years ; and he died.
- 21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuse-
 22 lah :* And Enoch walked with God, *in a course of singular piety, after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat a great number of sons and daughters. This shows that the conjugal life in its purity may stand with the strictest rules of holiness.* And all the days of Enoch were three hundred
 23 sixty and five years : And Enoch walked with God, *It is said of all the others, that they lived, but of him, that he walked with God : maintaining to the last an intimate communion with him, and a conscientious obedience to him ; and this was so highly pleasing to God, that he was translated that he should not see death ; (Heb. xi. 5.) and he [was] not found when sought ; for God took him immediately to heaven, both body and soul, to be a testimony of the future happiness of both. This was probably done in a public manner, on some solemn occasion ; by which God testified his regard to his singular piety, and comforted the hearts of good and pious men with the hopes of future happiness, when those great calamities, of which he prophesied, should come.*
 24
- 25 And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech ; *(not that Lamech mentioned ch. iv. 23, for he was one of Cain's posterity, but this was one of Seth's :)*
 26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred
 27 eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years, *the longest life that ever any man lived :* and he died, *just before the flood.*
- 28 And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and
 29 begat a son : And he called his name Noah, *which signifies,*

* This is a prophetic name, and signifies, *He dieth, and water is sent forth, Job v. 10.* And so it will intimate, that Enoch, foreseeing the deluge, gave his son this name ; by which he proved himself a prophet, as well as a preacher of righteousness : and it is remarkable, that this Methuselah died the very year in which the flood came. Edit.

- rest, or refreshing* ; saying, This [same] shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed ; *that is, he shall free us from a great deal of toil, by inventing or improving the art of husbandry, and such instruments as made it more easy.* And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, 30 and begat sons and daughters : And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years : and he died. 31 And Noah was five hundred years old : and *after that age* Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth. *Japheth was the eldest, ch. x. 12. and Ham the youngest, ch. ix. 24. but Shem is first, because he was one of Christ's forefathers, and because his progeny is the principal subject of this history.* 32

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be humble, as bearing the image of the earthy Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 49. and mourn that we have lost the image and likeness of God : that we are so like fallen Adam and his descendants in weakness and infirmities, in sin and death. It should grieve and shame us to think how sin hath debased our nature ; and should make us peculiarly thankful for Jesus Christ, the Lord from heaven, who restores the image of God in some degree here, and will perfect it hereafter in a better world.

2. We see the vanity of human life when prolonged to its utmost bounds, Those patriarchs, who lived so many ages, at length died ; the sentence was executed at last, though so long delayed ; *Dust thou art, and so dust thou shalt return.* What great opportunities had they for improvement in knowledge and goodness, in arts and sciences ! yet they died, and all their glory was buried in the dust ; and those of Adam's descendants, who were wicked, though they lived many hundred years, were accursed. Many days will not insure to us either holiness or happiness.

3. Let us be reconciled to that providence which shortens our continuance here. *The days of our years are now threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet are they labour and sorrow.* What then would they be if prolonged to many centuries ? It is a blessing that life is so short, considering how full of trouble and sorrow, sin and corruption, it is. Let us rejoice in the prospect of an eternal world, and live as those who look for that rest which remaineth for the people of God in heaven.

4. Let us observe and acknowledge the goodness of God in translating Enoch. It was a reward for distinguished piety in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and a strong proof of a future state and world ; for none could think so good a man would perish : it is a proof of the happiness both of soul and body in another state ; and (as a prophet) if he wrought no miracles,

this would be proof sufficient of his divine mission. This was one of the most instructive circumstances, that could happen to the patriarchal age. Adam, who had such intercourse with God, was dead ; Noah, who was to have those favours renewed, was not yet born ; in the middle age, when men were growing corrupt, Enoch was taken to heaven ; a circumstance that answers such noble ends, as were worthy of God to go out of the common way to accomplish.

5. Let us learn, like Enoch, to *walk with God*. This is the very essence of religion ; it establishes a friendly intercourse between God and his creatures, especially in and through Jesus Christ. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, then have we fellowship with him. He conversed with God in a friendly, grateful, and dutiful manner, and God with him. This is the most honourable, comfortable, and pleasant life we can live ; and if this be our temper and conduct, we shall share in Enoch's happiness ; and though we shall not be taken to heaven in so remarkable a way, yet his angels shall carry us to Abraham's bosom, and we shall dwell with God, both body and soul, for ever.

CHAP. VI.

Gives an account of the general corruption of the world ; God's determination to destroy the earth ; and the character and happiness of Noah.

1 **A**ND it came to pass, when men, the posterity of Cain, began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God, the posterity of Seth, who were members of the church, and professors of the true religion, but began to degenerate, saw the daughters of men, the female descendants of Cain, that they [were] fair ; and they took them wives of all which they chose, without any regard to their religious characters.* The sad consequence of this was, that religion declined, and the spirit of it was almost 3 banished from the earth. And the Lord, beholding this growing degeneracy, said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, as it hath long done, by good motions, checks of conscience, good counsel and warnings from those few good men that then lived, and especially from Noah,† for that he also, that is, all mankind, [is] flesh, corrupt, and wholly carnal : and though he deserves a speedy destruction, yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years ; so much longer A space will I allow him for trial and repentance. Now There were giants in the earth in those days ; men, who in the

* Such ungodly matches are every where condemned in scripture, ch. xxvi. 35. 1 Kings ii. 2. 2. Ezra ix. 12. Neh. xiii. 23, &c. Mal. ii. 11. 1 Cor. vii. 39. 2 Cor. vi. 14.

† Neh. ix. 20. 1 Peter iii. 19, 20. 2 Peter ii. 5.

- pride and confidence of their bodily stature, became despisers of God and goodness, and oppressors of men ; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare [children] to them, the same [became] mighty men, like their fathers which [were] of old, men of renown, much admired and applauded for their stature and strength, but tyrannical persons, who filled the earth with violence and rapine,*
- 5 *and were apostates from true religion. And God saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, all the motions and*
- 6 *inclinations of his soul, [was] only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart : he acted as men do when they repent, who alter the course of their actions ; so God changed the method of his proceedings, and the disposal of affairs and events.*
- 7 *And the LORD said, I will surely destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth ; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air ; for it repenteth me that I have made them.**
- 8 *But Noah, who continued pure amidst this crooked generation, found grace in the eyes of the LORD, so as to be eminently distinguished by him. These [are] the generations of Noah, his posterity and the events that befel him and them : as to Noah himself, he was a just man [and] perfect, upright, and unblameable, in his generations, [and] Noah, like his ancestor Enoch,*
- 10 *walked with God. And Noah, as was before observed, begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth ; of whom a more particular account will afterwards be given.* And now the time for ex-*
- 11 *cuting the divine threatenings drew near. The earth also was exceedingly corrupt before God, sinning openly and presumptuously, without any fear of him ; and the earth was filled with*
- 12 *violence, injustice and oppression. And God looked upon the earth with pity ; unwilling to proceed to severity till there was absolute necessity ; and, behold it was now universally corrupt ; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth,*
- 13 *except Noah and his family. And God at length revealed his awful but righteous purpose, and said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, the time of their destruction is at hand ; for the earth is filled with violence through them who inhabit it ; and, behold, I will destroy them with the beasts and fruits of the earth, and all things made for man's use.*
- 14 *But I will preserve thee and thy family ; therefore Make thee an ark of gopher wood, cedar, or rather cypress ; † rooms, or apartments of several stories for different purposes, shalt*

* An expression adapted to our capacity, to set God's detestation of sin, and his resolution to punish it, after that man had made himself quite another thing than God made him.

† Of this great quantities grew about Babylon, near which place the ark was built : this wood is incorruptible ; so that the remains of the ark might have been seen in Josephus's time, as he and others say it was. *Bp. Wilson.*

- thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch ; *with bitumen, a kind of liquid pitch common in the east, to make it water proof and swim the easier.* And this [is the fashion] and size which thou shalt make it [of:] The length of the ark [shall be] three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits ; *about one hundred and fifty yards long, twenty five broad, and fifteen yards high.** A window shalt thou make to the ark, *probably the whole length of it,* and in a cubit thou shalt finish it above, *making the covering to rise on the top half a yard, to throw off the rain ;* and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof ; [with] lower, second, and third [stories] shalt thou make
- 17 it. And, behold, I, even I, *the maker and ruler of the world,* do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein [is] the breath of life, from under heaven ; [and] every thing that [is] in the earth shall die, *but what is preserved in the ark.* But with thee, *my faithful servant,* will I establish my covenant *for thy preservation ;* and thou shalt come into the ark, thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every [sort] *at least,* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep [them] alive with thee ; they shall be male and female.
- 20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind ; *and I will order it so, that two of every [sort] shall, by a kind of instinct, come*
- 21 unto thee, to keep [them] alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather [it] to thee *in sufficient quantities ;* and it shall be for food for thee, and for
- 22 them. Thus did Noah, *who exercised faith in the divine threatenings ;* according to all that God commanded him, so did he, *notwithstanding the scoffs of a wicked and unbelieving world.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **S**EE the fatal consequence of unequal marriages, which brought these dreadful corruptions into the world. One would have thought these sons of God, these descendants of pious ancestors, should have minded something more than beauty in the face ; that they would have been solicitous about grace in the heart ; but it was not so. This is one great cause why corruption so much prevails in the world at this day ; and there is, perhaps, no instance in which good men and women have shown

* Some unbelievers have objected, that there was not room in such a vessel for all the beasts and birds, and their provisions ; but *Bp. Wicks* has proved there was ; and that a first rate man of war would be capacious enough for the purpose. The original species of beasts and birds were but few ; fishes are excepted. It appears to me that this account of the ark confirms the truth of scripture ; for its proportions are well adjusted ; whereas, had it been of human invention, or a Jewish tale, it would have been represented, according to our confused notion of things at first view, abundantly too large ; but it was a suitable size, done with truth and judgment.

their weakness and imprudence more, than in choosing those for companions in life who are only fair or rich, while they have overlooked the ornaments of wisdom and grace ; nothing by which parents have more discovered their love of the world, and little regard for the true welfare of their children, than in contriving and encouraging such matches only, as are founded on external endowments. The lesson from the whole is, *be not unequally yoked ; choose such as fear God ;* and form alliances with none but *the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.*

2. Let us admire the patience of God, which bore so long with a wicked world, namely, one hundred and twenty years. He had given them warning before, by Enoch and others ; yet he renews it, and retracts the sentence so many years. How unwilling was he to execute vengeance ! He bore long, gave them space to repent, and sent Noah to preach to them and warn them of their ruin. The building of the ark was a continued sermon ; yet they remained incorrigible.

3. See what a dreadful thing it is to grieve the spirit of God, which will not always strive with men ; there is a limited time ; if its motions are checked and its kind influences despised, it will withdraw ; and, if it withdraws, then men are sealed up under wrath and a curse. *Therefore quench not the spirit ;* attend to its sacred motions, seek its influences, follow its leadings, that you may be the children of God, and *sealed by it*, not to wrath, but to *the day of redemption.*

4. Let us be humbled under the present degeneracy of human nature, and grieved to think that this character so well suits us, and that our imaginations are so often evil. Perhaps there never was a time when it might more justly be said of the christian world, that it was *corrupt before God*, and *filled with violence.* Let us be humbled that there is such pride, lust, and carnality in the minds of men, and guard against those passions in our own.

5. Let us thankfully acknowledge God's grace and mercy in saving a remnant from intended destruction : that he did not destroy every inhabitant of the earth, and blot it out from among the works of his hands. This is a mercy we should be thankful for, and especially that in the new world *where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.* Once more,

6. God's singular favour to Noah is a strong argument in favour of singular piety in a degenerate day. His building the ark was an instance of his piety, and a proof of the sincerity of his faith ; thus he became *heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* He had truth on his side, though numbers were on the other side. He not only was good, but did good. He did not confine his truth and goodness to himself, but showed it to others. It is the sign of a great soul, for a man to retain his integrity in the midst of public corruption. Thus did Noah. Let us do likewise ; not follow multitudes to do evil, but distinguish ourselves by piety and goodness ; and God will remarkably distinguish us by his

favour here and hereafter. In a word, let us be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

CHAP. VII.

Noah enters the ark. The beginning, increase, and continuance of the flood.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou, *that is, be ready to come at the end of seven days*, and all thy house, thy wife, and thy three sons, and their wives, into the ark ; for thee have I seen righteous before me, and *studious to approve thyself in my sight*, in this generation. Of every clean beast,
- 2 such as I have appointed for sacrifice and food, thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female ; seven couples of a sort, *that some may be for food and sacrifice, others for breed* : and of beasts that [are] not clean by two, the male
- 3 and his female. Of clean fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female ; to keep seed alive upon the face of all
- 4 the earth. For yet seven days *from this time*, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth *incessantly* forty days and forty nights, and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth, *except what is in the*
- 5 ark. And Noah did according unto all that the LORD com-
- 6 manded him. *Such was his faith and obedience.* And Noah [was] six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.
- 7 And Noah went in, and his three sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood, *which they believed was just at hand to deluge the earth. The creatures also which came by a kind of instinct,*
- 8 Noah received and placed in their proper apartments : Of clean beasts, and of beasts that [are] not clean, and of fowls, and of
- 9 every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah to receive them.
- 10 And it came to pass after seven days, *or on the seventh day*, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth, *began to descend in such torrents, as plainly indicated the truth of the di-*
- 11 *vine threatnings.* In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month of their years, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day, *that very day, so worthy to be remembered,* were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, *the waters that were sunk into the earth, and kept in store-*

- houses there,* (*Psalm xxxiii. 7.*) gushed out in mighty torrents, and the windows of heaven were opened, from whence the rain descended, not in drops, but in immense cataracts. And the rain was in coming down upon the earth forty days and forty
- 12 nights. In the self same day that the flood began entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them,
- 13 into the ark; They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein
- 14 [is] the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him to receive them; and the Lord shut him in, directing him when and how to shut the door of the ark, that no one else might intrude.
- 15 And the flood was forty days without intermission in coming upon the earth; and the waters every day increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift above the earth. And now all hope of escape from the ceasing of the rain was given up, for the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and
- 16 the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and arose so high that they not only covered the plain, but all the high hills, that is, the highest in those days, that [were] under the whole heaven, were covered; so that in vain was salvation looked for from
- 17 the hills and mountains; for Fifteen cubits upward, that is, seven yards and an half, did the waters prevail over the highest lands; and the highest mountains were covered; so that the destruction of all but those who were in the ark was inevitable.
- 18 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man, woman, and child:
- 19 All in whose nostrils [was] the breath of life, of all that [was] in the dry [land,] did; but fish, and every thing that could live in the water, are plainly excepted. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained [alive,] and they that [were] with him in the ark.
- 20 And the waters prevailed upon the earth in their full strength an hundred and fifty days.

* Thus hills might burst, the rocks be rent, the earth be raised to higher mountains than before, shells and light bodies might be thrown to the tops of hills, where they continue to this day: and others might sink into the ground, where they are still discovered very deep in all parts of the earth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW happy are they who are righteous before God ! This was Noah's character ; and his deliverance is an emblem of the great salvation of all good men ; *they shall be saved from the wrath to come.* Let us follow after righteousness, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, who *were righteous before God, walking in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.* Let us not partake of the sins of a wicked generation, lest we also partake of their plagues ; but set the Lord always before us, approve ourselves in his sight, and, *whatever others do, serve the Lord ;* then will he hide us in his secret places, and surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh us.
2. How hateful is sin, which provoked God to blot out and destroy the creatures he had made ! What a fearful thing is it to fall into the hands of the living God ! Sin is that abominable thing which his soul hateth, and which he will severely punish. This story should be a warning to a careless world. Let us attend to that important question in *Job xxii. 15, 16. Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden ? which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflowed with a flood.* Let us hear and fear, and do no more wickedly.
3. How uncontrollable is the divine power over all his creatures, animate and inanimate ! over the beasts, to make them tame and gentle ; over all the elements ; he layeth up the deep waters in his storehouses, he setteth bars that they shall not cover the earth ; he taketh off those bars when he pleaseth, and causeth the waters below and above to unite their force to execute his divine commission, and chastise an incorrigible world. He sendeth rain in its season, or can withhold the bottles of heaven. Who would not adore and fear this awful God ? Who can stand before him when he is angry !
4. Observe how exactly God fulfils his threatenings, as well as his promises. He had long foretold this judgment by the preachers of righteousness in the old world, but the ungodly thought it would never come. Probably when Noah was building this ark, they came and asked him what he was about. When he told them, they laughed at him, and asked him, if he would sail on dry ground ? and thought much piety had made him mad. What contempt must have been poured upon Noah, when they saw him shut himself up in his ark, with so many beasts and birds. If there were any poets in those days, they were probably satirical and witty upon the enthusiastical old man ; perhaps they made ballads of him, and he became the song of the drunkard. Mark the end. The flood came, as God had said. Just and true are all his declarations. Men may sneer and despise, but *the Lord is a God of truth and judgment ; and blessed are all they that wait for him, and hope in him.* Once more,
5. How unable shall sinners be at the great day to escape di-

fine judgment ! So sudden and unexpected shall that day come, as *Luke* says, *ch. xvii. 26. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man.* How awful was the judgment in the days of Noah ; to be surprised by death in so carnal and secure a state ; in the midst of peace and safety, perhaps of mirth and riot. Alas ! What became of their sumptuous buildings, of the tyrants of the earth, of their giants and oppressors !

----- the floating vessel swum
Uplifted, ----- all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd.

Milton.

No doubt they tried all means to escape ; in vain they fled to trees and mountains ; perhaps clung about the ark, and believed what Noah had spoken ; but too late. Thousands might be waiting round the ark, and crying for admittance before it was borne upon the waters, but in vain ; God had shut the door, and man could not open it again. They saw that ark with envy, which before they ridiculed and scorned. *When God judges he will overcome.* Noah is safe in his vessel amidst the gushing torrents, the roar of beasts, and the shrieks and cries of his drowning neighbours. So shall the coming of the Son of Man be, sudden and unexpected. Sinners shall have no way of escaping ; none but those who are in Christ, of whose salvation the ark was a type, shall be safe ; all the rest shall perish. The Saviour, the Ark, whom they despised, will not take them in. Be sober, lest that day come upon you unawares. *Seeing we look for such things as these, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.*

CHAP. VIII.

This chapter presents a new scene ; the former was dark, and judgment was over the earth ; but in the midst of judgment God remembers mercy. The waters assuage. Noah comes out of the ark ; offers an acceptable sacrifice ; and God promises to drown the world no more.

- 1 **A**ND God kindly remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that [was] with him in the ark : and as soon as the end was answered for which the flood was sent, God made a sharp drying wind which he brought out of his treasures, to pass over the earth, and the waters
- 2 were assuaged ; The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven
- 3 was restrained ; And the waters returned from off the earth continually ; gradually gathering into seas, or sinking into the

bowels of the earth : and after the end of the hundred and fifty days in which they continued in their strength, the waters were abated, or began to abate.

- 4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon *one* of the mountains of Ararat.*
- 5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month : in the tenth [month,] on the first [day] of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen ; *about the beginning of May, when the heat of the sun would contribute much to dry the ground,*
- 6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days after the tops of the mountains were first seen, *that is, about the end of our July,* that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had
- 7 made : And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro *about the ark,* until the waters were dried up from off the
- 8 earth. *Also seven days after, the air probably being still foggy, and Noah incapable of making observations,* he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from the
- 9 face of the ground ; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, *the ground being still muddy,* and she returned unto him in the ark, for the waters [were] on the face of the whole earth : then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pull-
- 10 ed her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days ; † and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark, *probably on the evening of the sabbath, after some peculiar so-*
- 11 *lemnities of devotion, in order to strengthen his faith ;* And the dove came in to him in the evening ; and, lo, in her mouth [was] an olive leaf plucked off : so Noah knew that the waters were greatly abated from off the earth, *though not quite*
- 12 *gone.* And he stayed yet other seven days, *that is, till the next sabbath ;* and sent forth the dove ; which returned not again unto him any more, *finding rest and food sufficient.*
- 13 And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year of Noah's life, in the first [month,] the first [day] of the month, the waters were *entirely* dried up from off the earth : and Noah removed *part* of the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry, *free from waters,*
- 14 *yet soft and muddy.* And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried, *grown hard and fit for use ; so that it was a complete solar year, or three hundred and seventy five days, from the beginning of the flood to the drying up of the waters.* See ch. vii. 11.
- 15 16 And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives
- 17 with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that [is] with thee, of all flesh, [both] of fowl, and of cattle, and of every

* A long chain of mountains like the Alps. The Syriac renders it *Armenia*, so does the Vulgate.

† An intimation of their early measuring time by weeks.

- creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth ; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply
 18 upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his
 19 wife, and his sons' wives with him : Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, [and] whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.
 20 And Noah, *full of gratitude*, builded an altar unto the LORD, *before he built a house for himself* ; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar, *as an acknowledgment for his remarkable*
 21 *preservation*. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour ; *this was pleasant and acceptable to him* ; and the LORD said in his heart, *resolved in himself, and made known his purpose to Noah, saying*, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake *with such a deluge* ; for, or rather, *though the* imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth ; neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have
 22 done. *For* While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. *God here obliges himself not to overthrow the general course of nature all the world over any more, though particular places may suffer ; and, blessed be God, his promise hath never failed.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us adore the mercy of God to Noah and his posterity. He kindly remembered him, watched over the ark, and took care that it should be settled upon a mountain, while the vallies were like a quagmire. He also remembered the beasts, to whom such a confinement must have been very disagreeable. It gives us an amiable idea of the goodness of God to other creatures, as well as to man. *O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.*
2. Let us wait God's time for coming out of the most confined and uneasy circumstances. In trouble the heart is ready to fret against him ; but *it is good to hope and quietly wait for God's salvation* : so Noah waited for God's command ; he would not venture to come out of himself. Let us learn in all our ways to acknowledge him and he will direct our paths ; to eye his providence and follow his leadings, then we shall be safe and happy. *He that believeth, shall not make haste*, but wait God's time. Had Noah gone out sooner, the earth would have been damp, provisions would have been wanting for the beasts, and all might have perished together ; there is nothing like having a commission from God.
3. Let us learn to pay cheerful sacrifices to God for all his mercies, especially for signal deliverances. Thus Noah did, and it was pleasing and acceptable to God. When he brings our souls out of prison, let us praise his name. If God hath pre-

served us in deep waters, when the waves and billows were ready to go over us, let us bless him ; *for this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee.* Of the few creatures that Noah had left, he is willing to sacrifice some. Let us not grudge our tribute of praise to God, who in six and seven troubles hath delivered us. The offerings of a devout and grateful heart are still acceptable to him ; and if they are presented in the name of Christ, they will be a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour.

4. We should thankfully acknowledge the divine patience in bearing with the provocations of men, and continuing his mercy to the earth. Let us be thankful that he *does not turn a fruitful world into barrenness for the wickedness of those that dwell therein ; but giveth rain from heaven, and the appointed weeks of harvest.* He crowneth every day with loving kindness and tender mercy ; he crowneth the year with goodness, and the whole earth is full of it. He hath fulfilled his promise to this day ; seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, have not ceased. And this should also confirm our faith in the fulfilment of those promises which are yet to come, of spiritual and eternal blessings. So God himself teacheth us to conclude in *Isa. liv. 9, 10. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me : for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth ; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.*

CHAP. IX. 1—17.

In the two preceding chapters we had an account of the world being drowned, and restored to its original state of one family. In this, we have God's covenant with them, and the seal of it.

- 1 **A**ND God blessed Noah and his sons, *on their coming out of the ark, and said unto them, as he had said to Adam and Eve, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.*
- 2 **And he renewed to him the dominion originally given to Adam, saying,** the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth [upon] the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea ; into your hand are they delivered, *and for your*
- 3 *use are they intended.* Therefore Every moving thing that liveth, *which is fit for food,* shall be meat for you ; even as *freely as the green herb have I given you all things ; there-*
- 4 *fore it is lawful to kill and eat.* But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, *that is, raw blood, and raw flesh,*

- 5 shall ye not eat.* And surely your blood of your lives will I require, *that is, take vengeance for the shedding of it*; at the hand of every beast will I require it, *the beast that kills a man shall be slain*, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.
- 6 Whoso wilfully and unjustly sheddeth man's blood, by man, by the magistrate, shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man, *and therefore such an injury to man is a*
- 7 high affront to God, *whose image he bears*. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.
- 8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I, *the almighty and unchangeable Jehovah*, establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you, to the latest posterity; And with every living creature that [is] with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, and to
- 11 every beast of the earth *which shall hereafter inhabit it*.† And I will establish my covenant with you, *this my decree shall never be revoked*; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a
- 12 flood to destroy the earth. And, *to give Noah and his posterity the fullest satisfaction*, God said, This [is] the token, *the sensible sign or seal*, of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that [is] with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, *I now appoint it for this end*,|| and it shall be for a token of a covenant
- 14 between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And, *to speak after the manner of men*, I will remember my covenant, which [is] between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no
- 16 more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living

* This is a positive precept, intended for their health and preservation, to prevent unnecessary cruelty in the use of the creatures, and because blood was to be offered as a ransom for man's life and instead thereof, which he had forfeited to God's justice; and to make them more fearful of shedding man's blood, as the next words show.

† This shows that creatures are capable of being parties in a covenant and receiving benefit from it, who are not capable of understanding any thing about it.

|| There was a peculiar propriety in appointing the rainbow to be the token, as it appeared at a time when their fears would be naturally most apt to rise. The Greeks call it *Synspagee*, to intimate its being a wonderful work of God. As the rainbow is a natural appearance, occasioned by the refraction of the sun's light in drops of falling rain, most interpreters supposed that it appeared before the flood, and was now only appointed as a voluntary sign. But others, thinking this would not have been satisfactory to Noah, are of opinion, that there was no rainbow before the deluge, and that either there were no clouds, or they had not that quality, which is requisite to produce this appearance. In this particular those two different theorists, *Whiston* and *Burnet*, are fully agreed. *Homer* seems to have had a notion that the rainbow was at first set in the clouds to be a sign to man. *Ilia*d xi. v. 28.

love's wondrous bow, of three celestial dyes,
Plac'd as a sign to man amid the skies.

- 17 creature of all flesh that [is] upon the earth. And God, *again* said unto Noah, This [is] the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh, that [is] upon the earth. *This is often repeated, to strengthen the faith of all men, and especially of Noah and his sons, whom the remembrance of that dreadful deluge had made too apprehensive of the like again.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be thankful for the divine blessing, by which the world is peopled, and so many millions raised from Noah and his three sons ; so that such multitudes of inhabitants have spread over the whole earth. That this blessing of God still continues, and as one generation passeth away, another cometh ; this calls for thankfulness and praise.

2. Let us bless God for impressing this fear of man upon the beasts. It is a great happiness that they have not the use of reason, thereby to confederate together and pursue their common interest. It is an instance of divine goodness, that lions, tigers, and other furious beasts, are generally found in deserts where men cannot inhabit. God in his righteous judgment sometimes makes them the scourge of nations. Thus he sent lions among the Assyrians. It is his bridle in their jaws that keeps them from making havoc of men. Let us admire his goodness, and be thankful, as Job expresses it, that *we are at league with the stones of the field, and that the beasts of the field are at peace with us.* Again,

3. Let us acknowledge the liberal provision which God hath made for the sustenance and refreshment of men : that he hath not only given us herbs, but allows us to kill and feed on his creatures : that the flesh of different animals hath such different taste and flavour ; that there is such an agreeable variety, and that in general it is so wholesome a diet. *Every creature of God is good ; let us receive them with thanksgiving ; and whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, let us do all to the glory of God in the name of Jesus Christ.*

4. Let us acknowledge the divine goodness in his tender regard for the life of man : that we are not, as the fish of the sea, or the fowls of the air, left to devour one another. We are under the protection of good laws, and spend our days secure from violence. If God hath such regard for the life of man in general, how much more for the lives of good men ! *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints ;* and they shall be severely punished who shed innocent blood. God will certainly make inquisition for the blood of his saints, and will awfully avenge it, not only seven times, but seventy times seven. Here it is declared, *v. 6. whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed ;* and the gospel adds, that *no murderer hath eternal*

life ; he shall perish for ever. Let us then be tender of the lives of our fellow creatures, and do what we can to make them easy and comfortable ; for *he that hateth his brother is a murderer*.

5. Let us be thankful for the covenant made with man v. 9. It is a remarkable expression, *I, behold, I* ; this speaks his condescension and goodness ; *I*, the eternal and infinite Jehovah, *establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you*. Let us be thankful that he will not drown the world again ; but more especially so for the new and better covenant which is established in Christ Jesus, who came to save the world. This covenant is called everlasting, that is, it shall continue as long as the world endures. But the new covenant is everlasting in a nobler sense, as it extends through eternity. And to confirm God's fidelity, he is represented both in Ezekiel and the Revelation as seated on a throne, and a rainbow round about it. Whenever we see this glorious appearance in the heavens, let us remember the everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things and sure ; and rejoice that *he is faithful who hath promised, and will also do it*.

CHAP. IX.. 18, to the end.

We have here the sin and shame of Noah ; the wickedness of one of his sons ; the dutiful respect of the other two ; and some remarkable predictions of his concerning them.

- 18 **A**ND the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth : and Ham [is] the father of Canaan ; *from whom the Canaanites descended ; that accursed race, whose land God gave to Israel*. These [are] the three sons of Noah : and of them was the whole earth overspread, and peopled, *anew*.
- 20 And Noah, *as soon as he was settled in the earth*, began [to be] an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard : And, *some years after*, he drank *too freely* of the wine which he had made, and, *perhaps not knowing its strength, and before he was aware*, was drunken, or in some degree intoxicated, (*compare John ii. 10.*)
- 22 and while he lay asleep he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, *being told it by Canaan, (who probably first saw it, and therefore is only mentioned in the curse,)* saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two
- 23 brethren without, *in derision and contempt of his father*. And Shem and Japheth, *instead of joining with him in his indecent sport*, took a garment, and laid [it] upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father ; and their faces [were] backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and *perceiving the covering he had upon him, and inquiring the cause*, he

- 25 soon knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he by divine inspiration said, Cursed [be] Canaan, in his person and posterity ; a servant of servants, a most abject slave, shall he be unto his brethren. And from him the curse both ascended to his father Ham, and descended to his posterity the Canaanites. But upon his other two sons, who discovered so much
 26 filial duty, he pronounced a most important benediction ; And he said, Blessed [be] the LORD God of Shem ; who of his special favour hath enabled him to act such a worthy part, and hath taken him into a peculiar relation to himself ; and Canaan shall
 27 be his servant. God shall also enlarge Japheth, his territories and his posterity, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, they shall join like brethren in the worship of the true God, as the Gentiles do who are grafted on the good olive ; and Canaan shall be his servant, be in subjection to Japheth as well as to Shem, and excluded from the privileges promised to both.
- 28 And Noah lived after the flood, three hundred and fifty
 29 years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years : and he died ; but thirty two years before the birth of Abram. His great age was singularly providential for propagating religion in the new world, to which, as well as the old, he was, no doubt, a preacher of righteousness.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn hence how odious a sin drunkenness is. Though many excuses may be urged in behalf of Noah, and we know not that he ever repeated this crime ; yet, what dreadful consequences followed ! *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* Let professing christians walk circumspectly, and carefully guard against whatever might prove the occasion of sin and folly. The apostle not only delivered that prohibition, *Be not drunk with wine wherein there is excess,* but adds, *Abstain from the appearance of evil.* In order to avoid criminality in this, as well as in other things, it is good to keep out of the way of temptation. *Look not upon wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright ; at the last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.* This was strikingly illustrated in the case of Noah ; it exposed him to shame. If men did but see what beasts they make of themselves when they are in liquor ; how unbecoming a situation it often placeth them in ; and what folly it occasions them to utter ; surely they would abhor the thought of being guilty of this vice. *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.* Rev. xvi. 15.

2. See the scandal and sin of disobedience to parents, and how heinous it is in the sight of God. Ham, one of Noah's sons, was of so depraved a disposition, that he made sport of his good father's weakness, and publicly told his brethren of it in the streets ;

he secretly rejoiced, it may be, to see the good old man overtaken in a fault, for which Noah had severely reprov'd others, and perhaps Ham himself. Herein he showed himself to be one of those fools which Solomon speaks of, *who make a mock at sin*. It is no uncommon thing for the wicked to make a jest of the sins of others, as well as their own ; and to make the sins and weaknesses of good men, in particular, the subjects of their ungodly mirth : but it shows a dreadful degree of hardness in those who are capable of it, and especially in children, to mock at the weakness of their pious parents. Let young people carefully guard against every thing of this kind ; and let good men take care that they give them no occasion. The conduct of the other two sons of Noah, who so decently and kindly laid a covering over their father, was much to their honour, and affords an example well worthy of imitation. True charity, or love, will hide a multitude of sins, and cast a veil over a thousand infirmities of good parents, neighbours, and friends. Those who are thus kind and dutiful may expect a blessing ; but wicked scoffers, and especially wicked children of pious parents, shall be cursed with Canaan.

3. What a striking proof have we here of the foreknowledge of God, and the divine origin of the scriptures ! This prophecy hath been most remarkably accomplished in the history of Noah's sons and their posterity. We all know in what an awful manner the curse denounced upon Ham was executed, in the total extermination of the Canaanites ; and we know also, that the blessing pronounced upon the other two sons of Noah was as remarkably fulfilled, particularly in the descent of the glorious Redeemer from the posterity of Shem. Let us, with Noah, devoutly say, *Blessed be the God of Shem*, for the covenant of grace established in the Redeemer, and all the spiritual blessings conveyed through him. Once more,

4. Let us, who are of the race of Japheth, be thankful that we have been persuaded to dwell in the tents of Shem, and that the Lord God hath dwelt in our tents : that we *sinners of the Gentiles, who were once strangers and foreigners, are made fellow citizens with the saints and heirs of the promise*. Let us be thankful that we have still the tokens of the divine presence among us ; and especially if any of us have been persuaded to open to him the door of our hearts. Let us pray in faith for the accomplishment of the prophecies concerning the universal establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, that all the sons of Noah may become holiness to the Lord, and the whole earth be filled with his glory. *Amen*.

CHAP. X.

As there is little in this chapter of a practical nature ; a short illustration of some parts of it only will be given.

1 **N**OW these following [are] the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth : and unto them were sons born after the flood.

2 The sons of Japheth, *who was the eldest, were these seven ;* Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and

3 Meshech, and Tiras. And the sons of Gomer, *Japheth's eldest*

4 *son, were* Ashkenaz, and Riphath and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan, *the fourth son of Japheth, were* Elisha, and Tar-

5 shish, Kittim, and Dodanim. By these *several branches of Noah's family* were the isles of the Gentiles* divided in their lands ; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.†

6 And the sons of Ham, *Noah's second son, were* Cush, and

7 Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush, *were* Sebah, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah : and the sons of Raamah, *were* Sheba, and Dedan.

8 And Cush afterwards begat another son, *who was called* Nimrod ; he began to be a mighty one in the earth : *to affect and usurp a tyrannical government, and to enlarge his dominions.*

9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord ; *|| he made himself popular by hunting and killing wild beasts : and at last usurped the government, and became a cruel persecutor, oppressor, and tyrant : wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord ; his cruelty and tyranny were so notorious, that it became a proverb of reproach concerning a tyrannical person, He is a very Nimrod.*

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, *he being the founder of the Babylonish empire ; and afterwards he built* Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. *But his ambition not being yet satis-*

11 *fied, Out of that land he went forth to* Asshur, *that is, the land of Assyria, which was called by his name, Micah v. 6. and there*

12 *he builded* Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah : the same [is] still a

13 great city. And Mizraim, *the second son of Ham, begat several sons, from whom sprang the people called* Ludim, and

* Countries of Europe, called isles, because separated from Judea by the sea.

† At the dividing of tongues, God, by his providence, so ordered it, that all of a family or nation spake the same language, and settled themselves together accordingly, in such and such places.

|| The oppression of mankind is represented by *hunting* them. It is probable that Nimrod thus hunted men under the pretence of hunting wild beasts, and his courage and dexterity in the latter, might qualify him for the former. The expression *before the Lord*, is sometimes used only to denote something of distinguished eminence. See Gen. xiii. 12. Acts vii. 20. margin. Luke i. 6. The LXX. reads, *against the Lord*. Government, before Nimrod's time, was only patriarchal. It is observable that the first monarch was a tyrant ; and the conquerors of the earth may properly be stiled mighty hunters. See Jer. xvi. 16. Ezek. xiii. 21.

- 14 Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.
- 15 And Canaan, *the youngest son of Ham*, begat Sidon his first
16 born, and Heth, *the father of the Hittites*, And the Jubusite, and
17 the Amorite, and the Girgassite, And the Hivite, and the Ar-
18 kite, and the Sinite, And the Arvadite, and the Zamarite, and
the Hamathite : and afterward were the *several families of*
19 the Canaanites *now mentioned* spread abroad. And the border
of the Canaanites was from Sidon,* as thou comest to Gerar,
and it extended southward unto Gaza : as thou goest unto
Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto
20 Lasha.† These [are] the sons of Ham, after their families,
after their tongues, in their countries, [and] in their nations.
- 21 Unto Shem also, the father of all *who in scripture are called*
the children of Eber, (*and after him are named Hebrews*)
unto Shem the brother of Japheth the elder son of Noah, even
22 to him, *whom God had blessed*, were [children] born. And
The children of Shem, *whose family is of peculiar importance*
in the history of the church, were these ; Elam, and Asshur, and
23 Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram. And the children of Aram,
24 were Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash, *or Meshech*. And
Arphaxad begat Salah ; and Salah begat Eber *beforemen-*
25 *tioned*. And unto Eber were born two sons : the name of
one [was] Peleg, *which signifies, dispersion* ; for in his days
was the earth divided ;|| and his brother's name [was] Jok-
26 tan. And Joktan begat *thirteen sons ; namely*, Almodad, and
27 Sheleph, and Hazermaveth, and Jerah, And Hadoram, and
28 Uzal, and Dicklah, And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, And
29 Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab : all these [were] the sons of
Joktan. And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest
30 unto Sephar, a mount of the east. These [are] the sons of
Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands,
31 after their nations. These [are] the families of the sons of
Noah, after their generations, in their nations : and by these
were the nations divided in the earth after the flood ; *the oc-*
32 *casion of which division is hereafter related*.

* A famous ancient city, lying northward, which took its name from Canaan's eldest son.

† Or the famous city Dan ; called also Laish. *Judges* xviii. 29. and Lesham, *Josh.* xix. 47. This was the country of the Canaanites, which God afterwards gave to the Israelites, extending about one hundred and eighty miles. *Well's Geogr.* Vol. I. p. 304.

|| About the time of his birth it happened that the inhabitants of the earth were divided, first in language, then in habitation.

CHAP. XI.

The dispersion of the sons of men at Babel ; the posterity of Shem down to Abram ; and his removal from his native country.

- 1 **A**ND the whole earth was *till this period, that is, about an hundred years after the flood*, of one language, and of
- 2 one speech, *which probably was the Hebrew*. And it came to pass, as they, *Nimrod and his confederates*, journeyed from the east, that they found a large fruitful plain in the land of Shinar ; and they dwelt there.*
- 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, *which that country did not afford*, and slime† had they for mortar.
- 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top [may reach] unto *the clouds of heaven* ; and thus let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth : *let us perpetuate our fame, strengthen*
- 5 *our union, and provide ourselves a settled abode*. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded ; and *made it appear, by the sequel, that he took notice of this their proud, vainglorious attempt, to punish it*. And the LORD said, Behold, the people [is] one, *and are determined so to remain* ; and they have all one language, *which is favourable to their purpose* ; and this *which they begin to do is an evidence of their ambitious designs* : and now *they apprehend* nothing will be restrained from them,
- 7 which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand
- 8 one another's speech.‡ So the LORD, *by the confusion he introduced among them*, scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth : and they left off to build the city,
- 9 *without attempting it any more*. Therefore is the name of it called Babel, *that is, confusion* ; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth ; and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.
- 10 These following [are] the generations of Shem, *the ancestors of Abram, and progenitors of Christ* : Shem [was] an hundred
- 11 years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood : And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and
- 12 begat other sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived five
- 13 and thirty years, and begat Salah : And Arphaxad lived after

* The pleasant valley along which the river *Tyris* runs, comprehending the country of Eden, in which paradise was situated. See *Wells's Geog.* Vol. I. p. 209.

† A kind of liquid pitch, which was an exceeding strong cement ; of which there was, according to *Pliny*, great plenty in Assyria. With this, *Herodotus* says, the walls of Babylon were cemented ; it is called bitumen by some writers, and is thought to be the asphaltus, which (*says Suida*) being mixed with bricks and small stones, became as hard as iron. Edit.

‡ This was done by making them forget their former language, and imprinting several languages in the minds of several families or nations,

he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons
 14 and daughters. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat
 15 Eber : And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and
 16 three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Eber lived
 17 four and thirty years, and begat Peleg : And Eber lived after
 he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, *the longest of*
any of the patriarchs after the flood, and begat sons and daugh-
 18 ters. And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu : And
 19 Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years,
 20 and begat sons and daughters. And Reu lived two and thir-
 21 ty years, and begat Serug : And Reu lived after he begat
 Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and
 22 daughters. And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Na-
 23 hor, *the first patriarch who fell into idolatry* : And Serug lived
 after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and
 24 daughters. And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and
 25 begat Terah, *Abram's father* : And Nahor lived after he begat
 Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and
 26 daughters. And Terah lived seventy years, and *between that*
time and his hundred and thirtieth year he begat three sons ; the
most distinguished of which, though the youngest, was Abram ;
the other two were Nahor, and Haran.
 27 Now these [are] the generations of Terah ; Terah begat
 Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran, *the eldest son*, begat
 28 Lot. And Haran died before *the face of his father Terah in*
 the land of his nativity, *in the country afterwards called Ur of*
 29 *the Chaldees*. And Abram and Nahor took them wives : the
 name of Abram's wife [was] Sarai ; and the name of Nahor's
 wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, *their elder brother, de-*
ceased, who was the father of Milcah, and the father of Isaac,
 30 *otherwise called Sarai*. But Sarai was barren ; she [had] no
 child.
 31 And Terah took Abram his son, *who had been warned of*
God to leave his native country, and Lot the son of Haran his
 son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's
 wife ; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees,
 to go into the land of Canaan ;* and they came unto a place
 which they called Haran, *after Terah's son who was dead*, and
 32 dwelt there. And the days of Terah were two hundred and
 fifty years : and Terah died in Haran, *which was about half*
way to the land of Canaan.

* Here begins the four hundred and thirty years, at the end of which Israel came out of Egypt.

† The Samaritan Pentateuch reads one hundred and forty five ; which, Dr. Kennicott observes, vindicates the truth of St. Stephen's assertion in Acts vii. 4. Edit.

GENESIS XI.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn, that men are often imposed upon by their own ambition, and that God can easily confound their schemes. *He takes the wise in their own craftiness; no device that is formed against him and his designs shall stand: the fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him.* They wanted a name and a defence, and God gave them confusion. It is to be feared we have our Babels, on which we bestow pains and cost, to be talked of: but let us be cautious; *Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

2. Learn the dependence of the human mind and tongue upon God. He made man at first capable of speaking; gave him ideas, and the power of utterance. The wiser heathens ascribe the origin of language to God. What a surprising thing was it, that all the ideas of such multitudes should be changed, and a new language impressed on their minds at once! Some have said, that there was nothing new or strange in this; but no other than a divine, supernatural cause was ever assigned that was adequate to such an effect. God, who made the tongue, can easily give the proper use of it, and form the mind to the knowledge of a new language. Thus, while the world was peopled by the confusion of tongues, the gospel was propagated by the gift of tongues. See *Acts ii.* A circumstance equally extraordinary and useful in its place.

3. Since we find in this chapter, that human life was shortened, it becomes us to work in haste. Shem lived six hundred years; some of his immediate descendants only two hundred years; and at length the term was reduced to seventy years: therefore let us redeem the time, begin the great work of religion early, and *whatever our hands find to do, do it with all our might, since there is neither wisdom, nor device, nor knowledge in the grave, whither we are going.*

4. Friendship with God is a greater honour than birth can give us. Abram is here put before his older brother, because he was chosen to be a remarkable man. The greatest honour is to be a friend and servant of God: let us seek that honour which cometh from him only.

5. Parents should engage their children to set out with them in the way to the heavenly Canaan, the land of promise; thus, *v. 31*, Terah took his children. It is not sufficient to serve God ourselves, but we must do it with all our house: while we walk ourselves in the paths of righteousness and the way to heaven, we should endeavour to lead others with us; pray for them, that they may be inclined to follow us; tell them what a good land it is, what God hath commanded us and them, and what kind provisions he hath made for our eternal felicity. Let us be steadfast and diligent in all our attempts to persuade and lead them to the heavenly country.

3. Let not good men be surprised if they meet with accidents in the way, to retard them in their progress toward the promised land. Terah died in Haran. His children hoped for his company and instructions for years to come; but he was cut off in the way. This often happens to good men; their guides and leaders are taken away. Let us then be solicitous to fill up their places, to walk in the same paths; and not be slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

CHAP. XII.

The Old Testament being principally written for the Jews, much is said of Abram their ancestor. Ancient writers mention him as a great and good man. We now enter upon his story; and have here, God's call of Abram to leave his native country; the divine promise to him in Canaan; his removal into Egypt, on account of the famine, and Sarai's danger and deliverance there.

1 **N**OW the LORD had appeared in Mesopotamia* and said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, lest thou be infected with idolatry, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee, but with which 2 thou art not at present acquainted: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name 3 great; and thou shalt be a blessing;† And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; I will enter into the strictest friendship with thee; thy friends shall be my friends, and thy enemies my enemies; then comes the great promise; and in thee, that is, in thy seed, which is Christ, (as the apostle shows, Gal. iii. 8, 16.) shall all families of the earth, believers of all nations, be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, first from Ur, and afterwards from Haran, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram [was] seventy and five years old when 5 he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, proselyted servants as well as children; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, a strange and unknown land; but, trusting in God for their guide, they persevered, and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, afterwards called Samaria, unto the plain of Moreh.‡

* See Act. vii. 2.

† A means of conveying blessedness to thy posterity, who shall be blessed for thy sake; to thy friends and servants, who shall be blessed by thy instruction and example; to all the world by being the progenitor of Christ, and an eminent pattern of faith and holiness.

‡ Situated near the two mountains Gerizim and Ebal.

- And the Canaanite, *that accursed and idolatrous people*, [was] then in the land ; so that he could expect little comfort, and
- 7 found great trials for his faith. And the LORD appeared* unto Abram, for his encouragement, and said, Unto thy seed, though not to thyself, will I give this land, *which they surely shall possess* ; and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him, *for sacrifice and thanksgiving for his mercy, and to keep them close to the worship of the true God.*
- 8 And he removed from thence southward, unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, as it was afterwards called, but then Luz, and pitched his tent, [having] Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east : and there also he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD ; *worshipping God by*
- 9 *prayer, preaching to his family, and offering sacrifices.* And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south ; but found repeated disappointments, and trials for his faith.
- 10 And at length there was a famine in the land, *which obliged him to leave it for a time* ; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there : for the famine [was] grievous in the land of
- 11 Canaan. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now,
- 12 I know that thou [art] a fair woman to look upon : Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This [is] his wife : and they will kill me,† but they will save thee alive, *and some one will take thee as a*
- 13 *wife or concubine.* Say, I pray thee, thou [art] my sister:‡ that it may be well with me for thy sake ; and my soul shall live because of thee ; *my life shall be safe, and I shall have nothing to fear.*
- 14 And according to his expectation, it came to pass that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she [was] very fair. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh ;|| and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house, *probably in order to*
- 16 *his marrying her.* And he entreated Abram well for her sake, to gain his consent : and by Pharaoh's gift he had sheep, and oxen, beside what he had of his own, and he asses, and men servants, and maid servants, and she asses, and camels. But the God of Abram was highly displeased at the wicked designs
- 17 of the monarch ; And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai Abram's wife.*
- 18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What [is] this [that]

* By a new revelation, to strengthen his faith, now that he saw all the land before him possessed by the Canaanite. Abram is the first person to whom God is said in scripture to have appeared.

† This fear of being killed was the more inexorable in Abram, as the promise of a seed to descend from him was not yet fulfilled, and therefore was a security to his life.

‡ Though this was true in some sense, (ch. xx. 12.) yet not as they understood it ; and so he exposed her to danger, contrary to his duty.

|| All their kings were called Pharaoh, which signifies the father of the people.

* Probably with some such distemper as did both chastise him for, and hinder him from executing his designs.

thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she [was] thy wife? *which he might understand upon 19 further inquiry by Sarta's confession.* Why saidst thou, She [is] my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold, *since she is thy wife, take [her,] and go thy way. Pharaoh's retroof was mild and just, and his conduct 20 generous.* And Pharaoh commanded [his] men concerning him, *that they should not offer him any injury, but show him all manner of kindness:* and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had, *believing him to be a peculiar favourite of heaven.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us think nothing too dear to leave for God, and implicitly follow wherever he leads. Thus did Abram, *Heb. xi. 8.* The gospel commandeth us to forsake houses and land for Christ's sake; and if we do so, we shall in no wise lose our reward; *for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* All lands are the good man's country. If we are willing to follow the divine directions, God will lead us in the right way to a city of habitation, and to a happy end.

2. Let us earnestly pray for the divine blessing; that he may bless us, and make us a blessing to others; bless us in temporal, but especially in spiritual things. None can bless like him. Men may curse, but, if the Lord bless us, all shall be well. Good men are a blessing to others: God will make them so to the families and places where they dwell. Imitate Abram's faith and obedience: *for they that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abram.*

3. Let us be thankful for that seed of Abram, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed. We and our families share in this blessing. Christ is the greatest blessing in the world, the sum and substance of all other blessings. This blessing of Abram is come upon us Gentiles. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus.*

4. We learn of Abram to acknowledge God wherever we go: he built an altar in every place. Wherever we have a tent, let God have an altar. Let us maintain his worship in our families, and there call on his name. The master of a family should be a priest in his own house, should pray with and for them, and *teach them the way of the Lord, and the judgments of their God.* Let us serve the Lord with all our house, then he will bless us, and make us a blessing.

5. The best of men have infirmities in those graces for which they are most remarkable. Who would have thought that Abram, the father of the faithful, should distrust God, equivocate, and manifest such unbelief! Let us not expect to live without fears, or believe without infirmities; but be sensible what reason we have daily to pray, *Lord, increase our faith.*

6. Let us revere this remainder of virtue in the Egyptian court. Pharaoh restored Sarai when he knew she was Abram's wife. Few christian princes would have been so tender : he would not have taken her, had he known who she was. Adultery is a most wicked and abominable sin ; what Pharaoh would have been ashamed of committing ; and it is strange that all professing christians do not consider it to be so.

7. We learn not to be too suspicious of men's characters. Pharaoh and his courtiers were not so bad as Abram thought they were. We often find more honour and virtue among strangers, than we at first expected. Let us be on our guard against a temper that would lead us to suspect persons' characters without reason, and not fear where no fear is. We should believe the best we can of every man. *Charity hopeth all things, and believeth all things.*

8. Let us adore that wonderful providence that appeared for Abram. God appeared for him remarkably ; and, as it is expressed *Psaln cv. 14. he reprov'd kings for his sake.* He was dismissed in an honourable manner, and enriched with presents. The hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord : this would be an encouragement to Abram to trust him for the time to come ; to act an honest, upright part, not doubting but God would appear for him. *It was God, as Isaiah expresseth it, who raised up this righteous man from the east ; called him to his foot, to receive divine directions ; gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings.* He can never be at a loss to reward the zeal and fidelity of those who follow him fully, and are upright before him.

CHAP. XIII.

Abram returns to Canaan ; the difference between him and Lot amicably settled ; Lot's removal to the plains of Sodom ; God renews his promise to Abram ; who removes to the plain of Mamre.

1 **A**ND Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south
2 of Canaan. And Abram, *through the bounty of Pharaoh and the blessing of God,* [was] very rich in cattle, in silver, and in
3 gold.* And he went on in his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the be-
4 ginning, between Bethel and Hai ; Unto the place of the altar, which he made there at the first ; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD ; *gratefully acknowledged his goodness in preserving him in Egypt, and bringing him from*
5 *thence in greater affluence than he went thither.* And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and servants
6 dwelling in tents. And *such was the increase of both of them*

* See *Harris's Observations*, Vol. i. p. 121.

that the land was not able to bear them, did not afford food enough for so many flocks and herds. that they might dwell together : for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.*

- 7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle, *probably about some pasture or water †* and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled
8 then in the land, *and took up the best pasturage.* And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen ; for we [be] brethren, *both by nature and religion, and such contention will be a reproach to that religion, and expose us to danger.*
9 [Is] not the whole land before thee ? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me : if [thou, wilt take] the left hand, then I will go to the right ; or if [thou depart] to the right hand, then I will go to the left.
10 And Lot accepted the kind and generous proposal of his uncle, and lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it [was] well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, [even] as *Eden the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto*
11 *Zoar, all the way till thou comest to Zoar.* Then Lot chose for him self all the plain of Jordan ; and Lot journeyed east ; and *thus they amicably separated themselves the one from*
12 the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched [his] tent toward
13 Sodom ; *a fruitful soil, but a wicked country.* But the men of Sodom [were] wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly, *impudent and daring sinners.*
14 And the Lord said unto Abram, to comfort him after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and south-
15 ward, and eastward and westward : ‡ For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, *as a fildge of the heavenly*
16 *country, and to thy seed for ever, for a long time, if they are*
17 *obedient.* And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth : so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then]
18 shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee, *as the inheritance of thy posterity.*
18 Then Abram removed [his] tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Marne, || which [is] in or near Hebron, about twenty four miles south of Bethel, and built there an altar unto the Lord.

* The LXX. use the same word as John does, when He says, *the world could not contain the host*; that is, could not read and attend to so many : so the land could not contain them.

† Water was a scarce commodity in those hot climates, and the source of many disputes.

‡ It is probable he dwelt on a mountain and had a wide prospect.

|| An Amorite of great note ; a friend and confederate, and probably a proselyte of Abram's.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **S**EE what an happy thing it is to have the blessing of God wherever we go. This made Abram rich, and brought no sorrow with it ; his riches gave him an opportunity of doing much good ; and the blessing of God kept him from the snares of prosperity, from pride, and insolence. Let us seek his blessing to make us prosperous, to sweeten our enjoyments, and prevent our falling into various temptations, and foolish and hurtful lusts.

2. The children of Abram should cultivate peace: This is a beautiful part of Abram's character. Though superior to Lot in nature and grace, yet he condescends to his inferior, for peace sake. Let us as far as possible live peaceably with all men. Abram gave the preference to Lot. This is a temper becoming christians, to submit to one another ; to be pitiful and courteous. This is like some great and injured person making the first proposals of reconciliation. How truly amiable does he appear ! Observe his plea ; and let it ever be remembered when angry passions rise, that *we are brethren, fellow men, fellow christians, members of the same body ;* and also, that the Canaanites are in the land, those who wish us ill, and wait for our halting. Let us not give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, but live as brethren; conquer ourselves, and hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

3. We see the sad consequence of great plenty in Sodom. It was a fine fruitful country ; but pride and fulness of bread was its ruin ; they were sinners exceedingly against the Lord. This is too much the case with our own land ; it is fruitful, we are fed with the finest of the wheat, but we are sinners before God exceedingly. Lot preached to them, but they continued wicked. So it is with us, notwithstanding all the preachers of righteousness in the land : and we have too much reason to fear, lest God should turn a fruitful land into barrenness, because of the wickedness thereof.

4. Let us not measure the favour of God by our situations in the world. The sinners of Sodom dwelt in a pleasant place ; Abram and his family among the mountains. But this paradise was turned into the likeness of hell by the sinners that dwelt there. How much happier was Abram and his pious family on the mountains ! When men regard wealth and pleasant places more than the character of those they dwell among, they do not act wisely. In our choice of callings and relations in life, let the interest of the soul be first consulted : this is the way to have God's blessing, and that will make a desert as the garden of the Lord.

5. When friends forsake us, it is a pleasant thing to have God near. When Lot went from Abram, God renewed the visits of

his grace. His presence with the soul delights it at all times, especially when earthly friends disagree with us, or part from us; it is happy then to be able to say, *I am not alone, for my father is with me.* If we seek his friendship, as Abram did, he will be our ever present friend.

6. Let us often take an attentive view of the blessings which God hath promised, to strengthen our faith and hope. We should review his promises; the fulness and freeness, the suitableness and security of them; especially that of the heavenly Canaan, *v.*

17. We should live in the exercise of that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not yet seen; take a view of the better country, in the length thereof and the breadth thereof; trace it in the representation of God's word, there is the chart or map of it: and let our joy in the prospect be lively, and our conversation daily in heaven.

CHAP. XIV.

In the former chapters we have had several instances of Abram's piety; here is an instance of his bravery and honour; a war in which Lot was taken prisoner; Abram's rescue of him; and his interview with Melchizedek.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king* of Shinar or Babylon, Arioch king of Ellasar, in Arabia, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, in Persia, and Tidal king of
- 2 nations; † [That these] made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela, which
- 3 is Zoar. All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the place that was turned into the salt sea, when
- 4 God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, prince of Elam and a descendant of Shem, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled, hoping to shake
- 5 off the yoke. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that [were] with him, as allies, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Carnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, or the plain of Kiriathaim, And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan,
- 7 or the plain of Paran, ‡ which [is] by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which [is] Kadesh,* and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the

* The name of king is given to governors of cities or little provinces.

† A people gathered together out of divers countries, who put themselves under his government.

‡ A number of small cities who opposed their expedition.

* The fountain of judgment; so called in the time of Moses, because God judged the Israelites in this place for murmuring. *Numb. xx. 13.*

- 8 Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar. And *when the enemy approached near the cities of the plain*, there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zebaiim, and the king of Bela (the same [is] Zoar ;) and they joined battle with them in the vale
- 9 of Siddim ; *namely*, With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar,
- 10 and Arioch king of Ellasar ; four kings with five. And the vale of Siddim [was full of] slime pits ; and the *armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled*, and *many of their men* fell there ; and they that remained fled to the mountain.
- 11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.
- 12 And they took, *among the prisoners*, Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.
- 13 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew, *so called because he was descended from Eber* ; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner : and these [were] confederate with Abram. *
- 14 And when Abram heard that his brother, or *nephew Lot*, was taken captive, he armed his trained [servants,] *who were born, or instructed*, in his own house, three hundred and eighteen,
- 15 and pursued [them] unto a place afterwards called Dan. And he divided himself against them, *that he might come upon them in different places*, he and his servants, by night, *when perhaps they were asleep, or drunk, or off their guard*, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which [is] on the left hand
- 16 of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people *who were carried captive*.
- 17 And the king of Sodom *showed great respect to Abram for the signal service he had performed*, and went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that [were] with him, at the valley of Shaveh,
- 18 which [is] the king's dale, *where Melchizedek lived*. And Melchizedek, *which name signifies king of righteousness*, was also king of Salem, *that is, king of peace* ; this holy, generous man brought forth bread and wine, *provision to refresh Abram and his army* : and he [was] the priest of the most high God ; †

* This was about the year of the world 2093, when Abram was eighty four, or eighty five years old.

† These two offices anciently belonged to the same person, though afterwards they were distinguished and belonged to different tribes. In Melchizedek they were united, and he was both king and priest. Who this Melchizedek was, has been matter of much debate : some have supposed he was Shem, who was then living. Others have conjectured that he was the Son of God, from what the apostle says of him, *Heb. vii. 3.* that he was *without father or mother, &c.* But the meaning of this very plainly is, that his father and mother are not mentioned in scripture. Several ancient heathen writers use the same language of persons whose ancestors were unknown. His being *without descent*, having *neither beginning of days, nor end of life*, is to be understood in the same manner, with reference to his priestly office. This one circumstance is sufficient to prove that he was not Jesus Christ, viz. his being mentioned as an illustrious type of him. Compare *Psalms ex. 4.* with *Heb. vii. 17.* *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

- 19 *not of any particular nation but of God. And he, that is, Melchizedek, as a priest, blessed him, that is, Abram, and said, Blessed [be] Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven*
 20 *and earth : And blessed [be] the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. Abram humbly received the blessing of Melchizedek, as his superior, and he gave him tithes of all the spoils that were taken. This he did in gratitude for his kindness, and as a thank offering to God, to be offered by his priest.*
- 21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons of my subjects whom you have rescued, and take the
 22 goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God,
 23 the possessor of heaven and earth, and have sworn, That I will not [take] from a thread even to a shoe latchet, *not the smallest thing belonging to thy subjects*, and that I will not take any thing that [is] thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made
 24 Abram rich : Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of *the spoil belonging to the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre ; this I have no right to dispose of ; let them therefore take their portion.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us adore the providence of God in working these surprising things ; in settling these nations near Abram, that they might see his devotion, be witnesses of God's blessing him, and thus making way for the knowledge of the true God and his worship among them. He fixes the bounds of our habitation, and rules among the kingdoms of men.

2. We see how liable good men are to suffer by bad neighbours. This is often a punishment for choosing situations, without considering the character of the inhabitants where we are going : so Lot left the neighbourhood of Abram to dwell in Sodom, and suffered sufficiently for it. If we choose to live in wicked places we must expect to share in their calamities. Let us not think it strange, if we meet with them ; but if we keep close to God's house, his worship and people, we shall dwell safe from the fear of evil.

3. We should think of God as the Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth. So Melchizedek represented him ; so Abram styles him. He has sovereign dominion, for he made and supports all creatures. Reverence and praise are due to him ; trust and confidence should be placed in him, to give us what he thinks best.

4. Let us praise God as the author of the best of our actions, and those of others also. He gave Abram the victory, v. 19, 20. and Melchizedek mentioned it to the honour of the God of all our victories. While we rejoice in the success of others, let God have all the praise.

5. Let the servants of the most high God maintain an honourable character. Thus Abram did, v. 23. Like him let us guard against a mean and servile temper. Abram might have accepted the king's offer; but true religion requires an indifference to these things, an holy decorum and superiority to worldly concerns; trust and confidence in God raise the mind above them. Abram showed nothing of a mercenary temper, which is a dishonour to religion: every degree of a niggardly disposition should be avoided, especially as we have so many enemies to watch for our faults. *Let our conversation be without covetousness; and whatsoever things are just and true, and not only so, but whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, let us think on these things.*

CHAP. XV.

In the last chapter Abram appeared great in the field; in this he is greater in converse with God, who condescends to enter into a treaty with him; God's promise to Abram of a numerous issue, and of the land of Canaan.

- 1 **A**FTER these things, *Abram's kindness to Lot, &c.* the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, *while he was awake*, saying, Fear not, Abram, *be not alarmed at any of the dangers or enemies which surround thee in this strange land*, I [am] thy shield to protect thee; [and] *for thy faith and fidelity I myself will be thy exceeding great reward, and will give thee abundantly more than thou hast resigned to the king of Sodom*; I will reward thee both here and hereafter too. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, *what will all the earth signify to me, seeing I go childless, have no heir to possess it, though thou gavest me hopes of a numerous seed; and the steward of my house, who is next to myself, is not one of my own descendants, but [is] this Eliezer of Damascus?* And Abram further said, Behold, to me thou has given no seed, *though my life draws toward a close: and, lo, one born in my house, as a servant, is mine heir.*
- 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD [came] unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, *in his imagination, for the stars did not yet appear, (see v. 12.)* and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, *So numerous and illustrious shall thy seed be.*
- 6 And, notwithstanding the promise had been so long delayed,

he believed in the LORD ; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

- 7 And he said unto him, I [am] the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.
- 8 And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it ? *This he asks for the strengthening of his faith.* And he said unto him, *this shall be a sign,* Take and offer to me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.
- 10 And he took unto him all these, and, according to the usual method of ratifying a covenant, divided them in the midst, to represent the torn and distracted condition in which his seed was to be for a season ; and laid each piece one against another, that the persons covenanting might pass between them : but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls of prey came down in great numbers upon the carcasses to devour them, Abram drove them away.†
- 12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep, an ecstacy or trance, fell upon Abram ; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him, under an apprehension of the great distress his posterity should have by the vexation of their enemies. And he,
- 13 that is, Jehovah, said unto Abram, to explain the vision, and to comfort him, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them four hundred years, from the birth of Isaac to their deliverance out of Egypt ; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge or punish ; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, into the state of the dead, whither all thy fathers are gone before thee ; thou shalt be buried in a good old age, after a seasonable and natural death. But in the fourth generation, from the descent into Egypt, they shall come hither again, to the country where thou now art ; but it cannot be sooner : for the iniquity of the Amorites and Canaanites in general, [is] not yet full, nor the time to punish them come. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace appeared to Abram, perhaps representing Abram's seed afflicted in Egypt, and a burning lamp, as a symbol of the divine presence, noting the covenant between God and Abram, and their future deliverance, that passed between those pieces, to note the ratification of the covenant between God
- 18 and his people. In that same memorable day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, solemnly ratifying his former promises, and saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, and they shall ex-

* Thus Abram was justified by faith, being as yet uncircumcised, Rom. iv. 3. Gal. iii. 6. James ii. 23.

† Perhaps the fowls of prey were an emblem of the Egyptians and other enemies, who should seek to devour and destroy his posterity ; and his driving them away may represent his conquest over them by faith and prayer.

tend their dominion from the river of Egypt, (not the river Nile, but some branch of it,) unto the great river, the river Euphrates : so far did the countries become tributary in David's 19 and Solomon's days ; and shall include The Kenites, and the Kenizites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see the happiness of good men ; God is their shield, *v. 1*, to protect them from their enemies, from wicked men, and Satan ; from principalities and powers that are confederate against them. God would not have them to be fearful or sorrowful ; he will be their exceeding great reward ; will give them grace and glory, and *will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.*

2. Let us learn to be content in those circumstances which Providence allots us. One cannot but pity the weakness of the father of the faithful, after what God had said to him. All his wealth and honour, the fine country he lived in, and the favour of God ; all this was nothing without a child. Perhaps the Messiah or promised seed may be referred to, which may plead something in his excuse ; but still he seems uneasy in his mind. If God denies us temporal blessings, let us still be patient and content, and seek him for our portion. Let those who are childless in the earth be more diligent and active in the service of God, as they have more leisure and fewer cares ; then *will he give them a name and a place, which shall be better to them than sons and daughters.*

3. We learn joyfully to embrace the promises of God ; herein imitating the faith of Abram ; *he believed in God, and staggered not at the promise through unbelief, Rom. xiv. 20.* Let us be strong in faith, giving glory to God ; guard against an evil heart of unbelief ; and pray, *Lord, increase our faith.* If we trust his promises, and act agreeable to them, we have, through grace, a claim to all the benefits of the covenant ; and by this we shall obtain witness that we are righteous.

4. Learn to adore the foreknowledge of God in these surprising predictions. They are very remarkable ; so many years shall they serve their enemies ; then their enemies shall be punished, and the oppressed shall go free. He knows, not only the external circumstances, but also the moral characters of men ; when their iniquity is full, and when it is time to punish. This knowledge is too high for us ; *we cannot attain unto it ;* but it is found in a perfect manner in God. May we reverence this glorious God, who foreknows whatsoever shall come to pass, and *showeth unto man his counsel, declaring the end from the beginning.* This God is our God for ever, and he will be our guide unto death.

5. Let us rejoice in the assurance of a better country ; *Knew of a surety*, saith God to Abram. The promise to believers is sure ; we have his word and oath, *that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.* We have a sign and sacrament to confirm our faith : to all the spiritual seed of Abram the promise is sure. Let us imitate the faith and piety of this patriarch, that we may at length possess an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

CHAP. XVI.

The origin of nations and kingdoms is generally the darkest part of history : here we have a plain account of one that was very considerable : it arose from Abram, by one of his maid servants, who probably came with him from Egypt.

- 1 **N**OW Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children : and she had an handmaid, or bond woman, an Egyptian by birth, but a proselyte to the true religion, whose name [was]
- 2 Hagar. And Sarai, *impatient to see the promise fulfilled*, said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing : I pray thee, go in unto my maid ; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram, *not consulting with God, as he should have done*, hearkened to the voice of Sarai.
- 3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.
- 4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived : and when she saw that she had conceived, *she grew vain of the honour, and her mistress, as a punishment for her impatience and imprudence*, was despised in her eyes. And Sarai, *growing jealous, upbraided her husband, as if he encouraged this insolence*, and said unto Abram, My wrong [be] upon thee : I have given my maid into thy bosom ; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes : the Lord judge between me and thee : *plead my cause and vindicate my innocence, since thou wilt not do it.** But Abram, *far from taking Hagar's part*, said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid [is] in thy hand ; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face, *with a view to return to her own country.*
- 7 And the angel of the Lord, *appearing perhaps in a human form*, found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by

* By these quarrels in the family, God was pleased to correct both Abram and Sarai for seeking children in such an unwarrantable way.

- the fountain in the way to Shur, *where she stopped to rest herself and call upon God ; for she seems to have been a devout*
- 8 *woman. And addressing her in her proper character, to make her sensible of her fault, he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou ? and whither wilt thou go ? And she said, I flee*
- 9 *from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, return to thy mistress, and submit thyself*
- 10 *under her hands. And the angel of the LORD further said unto her, to comfort her in her distress, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.*
- 11 *And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou [art] with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael, that is, God shall hear ; because the LORD hath heard thy*
- 12 *prayers made in thy affliction. And he will be a wild man, warlike and violent ; exercising himself in hunting beasts, and oppressing men ; his hand [will be] against every man, and every man's hand against him ; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren, near unto them, in spite of all their*
- 13 *attempts against him.* And she called the name of the LORD, that spake unto her, Thou God seest me, hast taken care of me, and graciously manifested thyself to me : for she said, Have I also here, even in this desert, as well as in my master's family, looked after him that seeth me ? and, notwithstanding my misbehaviour there, have had a comfortable sight of him and*
- 14 *promise from him ? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahai-roi, that is, the well of him that liveth and seeth me ; behold, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered.*
- 15 *And Hagar returned to Abram's family, humbled herself to Sarai, and told what she had seen ; and in due time she bare Abram a son : and Abram called his son's name, which Ha-*
- 16 *gar bare, Ishmael, as the angel had commanded. And Abram [was] fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us view the hand of God in all our afflictions and disappointments, like Sarai, who acknowledged, *the Lord hath restrained me from bearing.* Sarai had every thing else she could desire ; but God continued this disappointment for the exercise of her faith and patience. It is a good thing to be sensible of this, and to say with Job, when tempted to repine, *shall we re-*

* This is one of the most remarkable prophecies in the whole scriptures. The Hagarites, Saracens, and Arabians, all descended from Ishmael. They called themselves Hagarites, as coming from Hagar ; but being reproached for this, they changed their name to Saracens, as coming from Sarai. They were the fiercest race of men ever known on earth, and continue of the same spirit to this day ; live by rapine and plunder, in the very same place for more than 4000 years, and all attempts to conquer them have been in vain. What a proof is this of the divine authority of Moses ! Who but a prophet of God could have foretold this !

ceive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil, or afflictions also?

2. Let us avoid an insolent temper in prosperity, v. 4. This is one of Solomon's four things by which the earth is disquieted, *an odious woman when she is married, and an handmaid who is heir to her mistress, Prov. xxx. 23.* This is often the case, especially in persons who have been suddenly advanced from a low to a more exalted station; their height makes them giddy. However distinguished we may be from others, let us be careful not to despise them; but remember to whom our prosperity is owing; consider *who hath made us to differ, and what is there that we have not received.*

3. Let us be careful not to appeal to God, under the transports of a peevish temper: this Sarai did, and it was very unbecoming. Abram might have said, *She speaketh as one of the foolish women speaketh.* Let us take care not to make God a party in our quarrels. A readiness to appeal to him is no argument that we are right; it is often a sign that we are wrong, and expect to be believed on that account, though we should have neither reason nor evidence on our side. God searcheth the heart, and it becomes us to guard against such transports of passion; for should we be in the wrong, he certainly knows it, and an appeal to him will be indeed sealing the curse on our own head.

4. We should admire the condescension of God to a poor fugitive slave. He mercifully stopped her when going a foolish journey; when her provisions perhaps were spent, he sent her back to pious Abram's house; improved her soul by her afflictions; and made her a blessing to the family. Again,

5. Learn to avoid that wretched character here given of Ishmael. Those who oppose others will be opposed themselves. Complaisance to such will not last long; men will arm themselves in their own defence. Let us therefore govern our own spirits, and not suffer them to be boisterous. Persons of this character have lives full of trouble, run themselves into difficulties, and are paid in their own coin; which is grievous, because they, of all men, are least able to bear such affronts. If our hand is against every man, every man's hand will be against us, from a principle of self preservation, but more commonly from that wretched principle of revenge, which too much prevails in the world. In like manner, if our tongue be against every man, and we reproach and censure others, with what measure we mete it shall be measured to us again. To prevent this, let us *honour all men; be kindly affectioned one toward another; forbearing and forgiving one another*; do good to all men, then men in general will be disposed to do good to us. Once more,

6. Reflect on God's omniscience, and his favourable interposition for us. Let us remember, in every place, *Thou God seest me*: look continually on him who looks on us; having our eyes

always up unto the Lord, for direction, support, and encouragement, whose eyes are continually upon us for good. It is the character of the wicked, that *God is not in all their thoughts*. We should set the Lord always before us, for we depend entirely upon him; *in him we live, and move, and have our being*. If he will not look on us, how miserable must we be! To live as under his eye will afford us the greatest pleasure and delight; it will be our greatest security amidst dangers and difficulties. This should be the concern of every one; we should charge our hearts to maintain this temper. Nothing will be so likely to make us truly serious and religious, as to recollect, that whatever we do, God sees us, and wherever we are, God is there.

CHAP. XVII.

God renews his covenant with Abram; institutes circumcision as the seal of it; changes the names of Abram and his wife, to whom he promises a son, in whom the covenant should be established; at the same time he blesses Ishmael; and Abraham circumcises his family.

- 1 **A**ND when Abram was ninety years old and nine, *that is, thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael*, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty God, *able to fulfil all my promises; therefore walk before me, as always in my presence, and be thou perfect, or upright and*
- 2 *sincere in doing my will.* And I will make my covenant between me and thee, *renew, enlarge, and confirm it with a sacra-*
- 3 *ment,* and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face, *in token of fear and reverence, being afraid to look*
- 4 *on God:* and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, *I declare on my part that my covenant [is] with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations; the Israelites and Ishmaelites, and believers in all ages, shall be esteemed thy spiritual seed.*
- 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, *an high or mighty father,* but thy name shall be Abraham, *that is, father of a multitude;* for a father of many nations have I
- 6 made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.*
- 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant,† to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, to

* This was true in a literal sense; but chiefly in a spiritual, in respect of the Messiah, who is King of kings.

† Of long continuance, in respect of the outward ceremony of circumcision, but for the spiritual part, literally everlasting in Christ, Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Peter i. 4.

- employ all my perfections for thy protection, consolation and salvation.** And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, *while they are a distinct and obedient people*; and I will be their God.
- 9 And God said unto Abraham, *And now on thy part I declare that thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, as a condition of all these blessings*, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. And This [is] my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin;† and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.‡ And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which [is] not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant, *a sign of that everlasting covenant I made with you.* And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, *and when he is grown up wilfully or unnecessarily neglects it*, that soul shall be cut off from his people, *from my church and people*; he hath broken my covenant *by his neglect and contempt of the condition required on his part, and hath forfeited the blessing promised on mine.*
- 15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, *which signifies, my princess only*, but Sarah [shall] her name [be,] *which signifies, a multitude*; *she shall be the mother of many people.* And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be [a mother] of nations: kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, *in token of his inward joy and satisfaction at this news*, and said in his heart, Shall [a child] be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?
- 18 *He did not doubt the matter, but was greatly surprised.* And Abraham said unto God, *in the midst of his holy joy*, O that Ishmael might live before thee! *live in thy favour, and not be cast off by thee, though I shall have another son to inherit the blessing.* And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac, *that is, laughter*,

* This promise includes all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings.

† That part which serves for the propagation of mankind.

‡ It was designed to be a further trial of Abraham's faith; to separate his posterity from the rest of the world by an indelible mark; for the preservation of true religion; and to be a perpetual memorial of God's covenant with Abraham. Thus a peculiar people were separated to serve God, by such a distinction as evidently appeared to be of divine original; and was a proper emblem of purity and indifference to sensual enjoyments.

- because Abraham rejoiced ; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee : Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly ; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant of grace, including the Messiah, will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham, withdrew the tokens of his special presence, and disappeared.*
- 23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house ; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him ; *such was his readiness to comply with the*
- 24 *divine command.* And Abraham [was] ninety years old and nine when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin,
- 25 And Ishmael his son [was] thirteen years old when he was
- 26 circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.* In the selfsame
- 27 day was Abraham circumcised and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the strangers, *a great number and from different nations, were circumcised with him ; no wonder therefore, that the practice spread to other countries,*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us consider the almighty God as self sufficient v. 1. as having enough in himself to satisfy all our desires, and supply every want. *Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee.* As we wish to say this, let us consider our duty ; walk before him with a perfect and upright heart ; set him before us at all times, in every act of devotion, in all our behaviour ; and do all as seeing him who is invisible. Without this we are not interested in his all sufficiency, but forfeit all claim to his favour.

2. We should bless God that the covenant was made with Abraham, to be a God to him and to his seed after him. This covenant typified and contained better blessings than the land of Canaan, and was established on better promises ; it is true and firm ; established as an everlasting covenant with Abraham and all his spiritual seed. How rich and precious the promise, *I will be a God unto thee !* How much comfort here, and glory hereafter, is contained in this ! It includes not only an earthly but an heavenly Canaan. How condescending was it in God to speak so familiarly to him, and give him such exceeding great and precious promises ! There is much of the gospel in this covenant ; and in

* Therefore the Arabs never circumcise till the age of thirteen.

consequence of it, *Abraham rejoiced, or earnestly desired, to see Christ's day ; and by faith he saw it, and was glad.*

3. Let us seek our own part in the blessings of it ; *they that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.* We should consider their value and extent ; submit cheerfully to the terms of the covenant ; and ever remember, that *in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature.* God hath now changed the seal of the covenant into a more gentle administration, of which both sexes partake ; there is neither male nor female in Christ, but all are one in him. As we desire the blessings of this covenant, let us comply with the terms of it, which are faith and obedience. Those who submitted to circumcision were debtors to the whole law, to all the ceremonies and rites of the Jewish religion ; and every believer in Christ is a debtor to the whole of what christianity requires, *viz.* to baptism, the Lord's supper, and all moral duties.

4. We learn to be particular in our addresses for those who are dear to us. Abraham said unto God, *v. 18. O that Ishmael might live before thee !* When God condescends to converse with us, when our souls are enlarged in devotion, then we have a good opportunity to put in a word for our friends and relations ; to spread our own cases and theirs particularly before him. Let parents, especially, be concerned for the souls of their children ; pray that they may live ; that they may live before God, holily and religiously, to his honour, and the credit of their profession. Not only that their temporal lives may be preserved, but the spiritual life carried on in their souls, and that they may be fitted for eternal life. Pray particularly for them all, as Job and Abraham did. We have great encouragement to hope that God will answer our prayers, as he did that of Abraham, *v. 20.* God hath never said to the seed of Jacob, *Seek ye me in vain :* and though the blessing may be long delayed, it will come at last ; at least our prayers shall not return into our bosom void.

5. Learn to obey God without delay, as Abraham did ; *the self-same day.* This is twice remarked by the historian, to show us how readily we must serve God, even in painful and difficult matters. Let us not confer with flesh and blood, but resolutely perform those duties which God hath commanded. He hath required nothing of us that is unreasonable, nothing but what is for our comfort ; may we therefore resolve according to this example of Abraham, that *whatever our hand findeth to do, we will do it with all our might,* and that we will make haste and not delay to keep *God's righteous judgments,*

CHAP. XVIII. 1—19.

The prophet Isaiah observes, that ' God will meet those who rejoice and work righteousness ;' this was exemplified in Abraham. No sooner had he circumcised his house, than God appears to him again ; sends him a comfortable message by three angels, whom Abraham entertains ; and renews his promise to Sarah of a son.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD appeared unto him, *that is, Abraham*, in the plains of Mamre : and he sat in the tent door in the
 2 heat of the day, *for the sake of being cool* ; And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men* stood by him ; and when he saw [them,] he ran *in the most friendly manner* to meet them from the tent door, and *as they appeared to be persons of rank and respectability*, he bowed himself toward the
 3 ground, And said to one who appeared to be the chief, and *who was probably Christ, by whom God had manifested himself to men*, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass
 4 not away, I pray thee, from thy servant : Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet,† and rest yourselves
 5 under the tree, *where it is cool and shady* : And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts ; after that ye shall pass on : for therefore, *I presume*, are ye come to your
 6 servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.‡ And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead [it,] and
 7 make cakes upon the hearth, *or hot stone*. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave
 8 [it] unto a young man : and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and *part of the calf which he had dressed*, and set [it] before them ; and he stood by them under the tree, *to wait upon them*, and they did eat.||
 9 And they said unto him, Where [is] Sarah thy wife ? And he said, Behold, in the tent. *Surprised to hear them call her by name*, he began to think his guests were more than common
 10 ones. And he, *who appeared as the representative of God*, said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, *or in due time* ; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard [it] in the tent door, which [was] behind him.
 11 Now Abraham and Sarah [were] old, [and] well stricken in age ; [and] it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of
 12 women. Therefore Sarah, *not knowing her guests*, laughed,

* Angels in human form ; so the apostle assures us they were, *Heb. xiii. 2*.

† This was necessary and very refreshing in those hot countries, where they were sandals, or went barefoot.

‡ This gives us a beautiful idea of ancient hospitality, when there were no such places of entertainment as we have.

|| A delightful instance of the simplicity of ancient times. So *Homer* represents *Achilles* as serving up, with his own hand, a dish that *Patroclus* had been cooking.

- or smiled, within herself, and doubted of what was said, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old*
 13 *also? And the LORD, who knew the thoughts of Sarah, said unto Abraham, by the angel that represented him, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, and treat the promise with derision, saying, Shall I of*
 14 *a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed will I return unto thee, accord-*
 15 *ing to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah came forward, and being in confusion, denied it, saying, I laugh-*
 16 *ed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.* And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom, where they had an awful commission to execute: and Abraham, to show his respect, went with them to bring them on the way.*
 17 *And the LORD said to the angels who attended him, shall*
 18 *I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? Since I have promised to do greater matters for him than this,*
 19 *why should I hide this from him? For I know that I shall not acquaint him with this in vain, I know that he will command his children and his household after him, that they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us imitate Abraham's generosity in a readiness to do good offices. This is Paul's inference from this story, in *Heb. xiii. 2. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.* Abraham did not stay to be asked; but seeing these travellers weary and faint, he hastened to invite and relieve them. He did it with great modesty and humility; *Let me fetch a little water and a morsel of bread;* he said nothing of the provisions he intended; he treated them with great decency and hospitality, and waited on them himself, though a prince who had vanquished kings. Thus we should learn to do good and to communicate. Those whom Providence hath blessed with abundance should be liberal and generous, sincere and hearty, without grudging. Here was no luxurious entertainment, no costly niceties, but all was plain and friendly. A good example of temperance and friendliness united. Luxurious entertainments are not instances of respect; they are often the cause of sin in those who partake of them. While we imitate this good patriarch's charity and generosity, let us also imitate his

* She probably soon repented and believed the promise, for the apostle commends her faith, *Heb. xi. 11.*

plainness and simplicity, and avoid those dainties which are so often deceitful meat.

2. Let the daughters of Abraham learn to be in subjection to their husbands. This is the apostle's inference from this story, *1 Peter* iii. 1, 5, 6. *Likewise ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands in all things lawful, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him, whenever she spoke of him, her lord, though she was of the same family, and greatly honoured both by God and men, as well as Abraham. Remember this excellent woman, whose daughters ye indeed are as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement; are not led hastily or inconsiderately, through shame or fear, to say or do what is wrong.*

3. Let us imitate Abraham in a religious care of our families, *v. 19.* This was a bright part of his character; *I know Abraham, says the Lord, that he will command his children and his household to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.* God himself approved of this, that he taught them diligently; that his principal care was about practical religion, to keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment; that he added his authority to his instructions, and insisted upon it, as a qualification for a place in his family. All heads of families should imitate this example, and take care of their servants as well as their children; they have souls to be looked after, and in minding our business they too often neglect those souls. We should guard them against such an error; not labour to fill their heads with notions and speculations, as too many parents and masters do; but, like Abraham, teach them those things they can understand and practise; to keep God's ways, to be devout, and do justice and judgment; to be honest in their dealings, and faithful to their promises. Let us be concerned, like Abraham, that religion may flourish when we are gone; and therefore command our household to keep God's ways when we are taken from them. This is the way to secure God's favour, to enjoy his gracious presence in this world, and in that which is to come.

CHAP. XVIII. 20, to the end.

God here acquaints Abraham with his intention to destroy Sodom and the cities of the plain; upon which Abraham humbly and earnestly intercedes for them.

20 **A**ND the LORD said, Because the cry, the sins and provocations, of Sodom and Gomorrah is great,* and because their sin is very grievous; therefore, to speak after the
21 manner of men, I will go down now, and see, inquire into the truth of the thing, whether they have done altogether

* These two cities only are mentioned, because they were the chief, and perhaps the most wicked.

- according to the cry of it, which is come unto me ; and if not, I will know ; *I will make a strict scrutiny, that my justice as*
- 22 *well as my righteous judgment may appear.* And the men, *that is, two of the three, who were angels,* turned their faces from thence, and went towards Sodom : but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.
- 23 And Abraham drew near, *with reverence and humble con- fidence,* and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the
- 24 wicked ? *I am sure thou wilt not.* Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city, *in all the cities, the chief being just for all the rest :* wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place
- 25 for the fifty righteous that [are] therein ? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked :* and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that
- be far from thee : Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ; *deal in that moderate and equitable way, which God is pleased to use with the sons of men ?* And the LORD said, if I find in
- 26 Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the
- 27 place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD,
- 28 which [am but] dust and ashes.† Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous : wilt thou destroy all the city for [lack of] five ? And he said, If I find there forty and five,
- 29 I will not destroy [it.] And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And
- 30 he said, I will not do [it] for forty's sake. And he said [unto him,] Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak : Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I
- 31 will not do [it,] if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD : Perad-
- venture there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will
- 32 not destroy [it] for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once : Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not
- 33 destroy [it] for ten's sake. *Abraham could not in decency proceed any further ; and he might reasonably hope that in all the cities there were at least ten righteous persons, including Lot and his family.* And the LORD went his way, *withdrew the tokens of his presence, and disappeared,* as soon as he had left communing with Abraham : and Abraham returned unto his place to wait the event.

* Sometimes the righteous are taken away in public calamities, but then it is in mercy to them.

† The nearer we approach to God, the more sensible we are of our own meanness and vileness.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us learn from hence, humility in all our addresses to God. This was an amiable part of Abraham's character ; *How shall I, who am dust and ashes, mean and vile, take upon me to speak unto thee ?* It becomes us thus to draw nigh to God, with reverence and godly fear ; to acknowledge our unworthiness and sinfulness, and the vast distance there is between God and us. Let us not be rude in the divine presence, or rush into it as the horse into the battle, but consider Him with whom we have to do. How admirable is his condescension to suffer us to come into his presence and to speak to him, yea, plead with him, as a man with his friend ! Well may we come before the Lord, as David did, and say, *Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto !* Well may we break out in a holy strain of gratitude, and say, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ, through whom we have access with humble confidence, and can come with an holy boldness to the throne of grace, to seek mercy, and grace to help in every time of need.*

2. We see how highly God esteems and regards the righteous : if only ten righteous persons had been found in Sodom, it would have been saved. Good men are the defence of a nation ; better than the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. They are blessings to any place or neighbourhood ; and when they are removed, our glory and security are taken away. Those who think otherwise, and persecute or oppress them, are cutting the bough on which they themselves stand. See in this instance how acceptable their piety is to God ; *He would spare the wicked for their sake.* The saints are the excellent ones of the earth, and our delight should be in them. And if in the midst of public calamities the righteous should be taken away, it is in mercy to them.

3. We see the astonishing efficacy of prayer. It had in this instance great honour put upon it, and met with great success, God was pleased to come down to very low terms indeed ; nor even then left off granting till Abraham was quite ashamed, and could ask no more. Let this encourage us to intercede for our own land, where there are so many righteous persons ; *let us stand in the breach and lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting.* It is a sad thing indeed when the times are so bad, that the prayers of the remaining few will not prevail. Let us stir up ourselves to call upon God ; and let the success of Abraham's petitions in behalf of wicked Sodom, excite our hope and humble boldness. Above all, let the long suffering, the compassion, the goodness, and mercy of God, confirm our faith and confidence that we shall not seek his face in vain.

4. What great reason have we all to rejoice in the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ ! If the prayer of a righteous man

availeth much ; if the prayer of Abraham almost prevailed for Sodom ; if the prayer of Moses so often delivered Israel ; how much more reason have we to hope, that the intercession of our great High Priest, the Son of God, who is passed into the heavens for us, shall be successful ? *He offers the prayers of all the saints, mixed with his much incense, and him the Father heareth always.* In his name let us intercede for our country, and for our own souls ; for whatsoever we ask of the Father in his name, it shall be done unto us.

CHAP. XIX. 1—22.

Contains an account of Lot's entertainment of the angels ; the shameful attempt that was made upon them ; and the deliverance of Lot from this wicked place.

- 1 **A**ND there came two angels* to Sodom at even ; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom, *probably to invite strangers, knowing how apt his townsmen were to abuse them ;* and Lot seeing [them] *make a respectable appearance,* rose up to meet them ; and he bowed himself with his face toward the
- 2 ground ; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay ; but we will abide in the street
- 3 all night, *which was common in those hot countries.* And he, *knowing the danger of being exposed all night in Sodom,* pressed upon them greatly ; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house ; and he made them a feast, *of such provisions as he had,* and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.
- 4 But a most horrible attempt was made upon these strangers before they lay down, for the men of the city, [even] the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter : and they called unto Lot,
- 5 and said unto him, Where [are] the men which came in to thee this night ? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. *They were, as Paul expresses it, Rom. i. 17. given up to vile affections, burning in lust one toward another ; men with*
- 6 *men, working that which was unseemly.* And Lot went out at
- 7 the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly ; *with all tenderness and earnestness, beseeching them to refrain from their wicked designs.* Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man ; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as [is] good in your eyes : only unto these men do nothing ; for therefore came they under the shadow

* Perhaps those two who had departed from Abraham.

- 2 of my roof.* And they said, *in the height of rage and resentment*, Stand back. And they said [again,] This one [fellow] came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge : now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, [even] Lot, and came near to break the
 10 door. But the men, *the two angels*, put forth their hand, and
 11 pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that [were] at the door of the house with blindness,† both small and great : so that they wearied themselves to find the door.
- 12 And the men, *that is, the angels*, said unto Lot, Hast thou here any relations beside ? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and *whatsoever* thou hast in the city, bring [them] out of this place ; *though they should be wicked, we have com-*
 13 *mission to show them mercy for thy sake* : For we will destroy this place, because the cry of *the sins* of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD ; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.
- 14 And Lot went out and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, or were betrothed to them, *v. 8. and, notwithstanding the danger to which he exposed himself, exhorted*
with them, and said, Up, get you out of this place ; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law, *and they made a jest of his warning*.
- 15 And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here ; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity or *pun-*
 16 *ishment* of the city. And while he lingered, *perhaps desirous of saving some others, or praying God to spare the city*, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters ; the LORD being merciful unto him : and they brought him forth, and set him without
 17 the city. And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he, *one of the angels*, said, Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain ;
 18 escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord : Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life ; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take
 20 me, and I die before I can get there : Behold now, this city, *called Bela*, [is] near to flee unto, and it [is] a little one : *and therefore as its inhabitants, so its sins are fewer* : oh, let me escape thither, ([is] it not a little one ?) and my soul shall live,
 21 *shall rejoice and be cheerful*. And he, *that is, God*, said unto him by the angel, See, I have accepted thee, granted thy re-

* This was, undoubtedly, a very unwarrantable offer in Lot, and what he ought not to have made ; it was doing evil that good might come. Of two evils we may choose the least, but of two sins we must choose neither.

† Not with the loss of their eyes, but with a great dimness, or a thick dark mist.

quest concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken ; *so much do I regard*
 22 *the prayers of my people, for their safety and happiness.* Haste thee, escape thither ; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither, *because of God's promise to save thee from the destruction.* Therefore from that time the name of the city was called Zoar, *that is, a little one.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see in these verses, what monstrous wickedness the human nature is capable of. We cannot think of it without horror, that the men of Sodom, young and old, should attempt the commission of such a crime in such an open and impudent manner. When men declare their sin, like Sodom, they must be daring sinners indeed. Pride, fulness of bread, and much idleness, led those exceeding great sinners to such a pitch of wickedness ; their habitual practice of sin, took away the horror of it. *Filthy conversation and unlawful deeds* the apostle Peter charges them with. These wretches were not ashamed, neither could they blush. Their wickedness was greatly aggravated by the temporal blessings which God had bestowed upon them, and by the example and reproofs of Lot ; but they continued in the practice of the most vile and unnatural wickedness, till *wrath came upon them to the uttermost.* Let us bewail their degeneracy, and avoid every appearance of such evil.

2. Observe here with pleasure God's care of a good man, and his favour to him. This is the apostle's inference in 2 Peter ii. 7, 8, 9, where he says, *God delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked :* and infers, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.* Lot lived in a wicked place, and kept himself pure ; he did not follow a multitude to do evil ; but was singularly holy, and reproved them by his preaching and example ; and God showed such a regard for him, and his promises to him, that he says, v. 22. *I cannot do any thing till thou art safe.* He would rather let them all escape, than hurt him. How precious are the lives of good men in the sight of God ! He will take care that they are preserved. Those who, like Lot, mourn for the abomination of the times and places where they live, shall have a mark set upon them before the destroying angel goes forth ; and he shall not come near any man on whom that mark is found ; he will spare them now, and when the day comes, in which he maketh up his jewels, he will honour and reward them. Let this engage us to be *blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.*

3. God's dealings with Lot are an emblem of his dealings with his people in general. He hath sent messengers to convince them of the evil of sin, and exhort them to flee from the wrath to come ; yet sometimes, when they believe the message, they linger, and are too much attached to earth and sense ; but God being merciful to them, as was here said of Lot, repeats the warning, takes them by the hand, and pulls them out. Their salvation is to be ascribed to God's mercy ; they are saved by grace. If God had not brought them out, they would have lingered still, and perished with the ungodly. We are exhorted to escape for our lives, as we prize the life of our souls, and desire eternal life. We are not to look behind, to slacken our pace, or hearken to the allurements of the world ; but escape to the mountain ; reach toward Christ and heaven, and take up with nothing short of it. That is a necessary exhortation, *work out your own salvation ;* for we are too prone to trifle, though we know we are in danger of being consumed ; and that is a most encouraging promise which follows it, *for God will work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

CHAP. XIX. 23, to the end.

The destruction of Sodom and the cities of the plain ; and some unhappy circumstances relating to Lot's family.

- 23 **T**HE sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zéar ; *it was a fine bright morning, and no appearance of the storm that was just going to fall.*
- 24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, and upon Admah and Zeboim, hail and lightning, brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, *by his own immediate power, and not according to the common course of nature ;* And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.*
- 25 But his wife looked back from behind him, *out of curiosity, unbelief, and a covetous desire of what she had left behind,* and she became a pillar of salt.†
- 26 And Abraham gat up early in the morning, *full of anxiety to know the event,* and he hastened to the place where he stood before the LORD : And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.
- 27 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the

* The plain where they stood was changed into a sulphureous lake, called *the Dead Sea.*

† The lightning blasted her. She was struck dead, but not thrown down. She stood erect like a pillar or statue. The brimstone and salt which were rained down, fell upon her, and not only crusted her over, but penetrated through her whole body. Thus she was instantly petrified ; changed into a substance that would endure for many ages ; a metallic salt. *Josephus* tells us he himself had seen it.

plain, that God remembered Abraham, *his intercession and the promise made to him, and Lot's relation to him*, and he sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt. *This intimates that Lot, though a good man upon the whole, yet had deserved to perish with this wicked people, because he fixed his residence among them from worldly views, and also that he was saved for Abraham's sake.*

30 And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him ; for he feared to dwell in Zoar, lest the people of that place should fall upon him, as the cause of the destruction of Sodom : and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 And the first born said unto the younger, Our father [is] old, and [there is] not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth ; *we live here in a cave without the society of any but ourselves, and it is all one to us as if*

32 *there was not a man upon the face of the earth* : Come, let us make our father drink wine,* and we will lie with him,

33 that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night : and the first born went in ; and lay with her father ; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. *Drunkenness drowns the un-*

34 *derstanding, senses, conscience, and all.* And it came to pass on the morrow, that the first born said unto the younger, Be- hold, I lay yesternight with my father : let us make him drink wine this night also ; and go thou in, [and] lie with

35 him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also : and the younger arose, and lay with him ; and he perceived not when she

36 lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daugh-

37 ters of Lot with child by their father.† And the first born bare a son, and called his name Moab, *that is a child from my father ; the same [is] the father of the Moabites.* unto this

38 day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi, *that is, the son of my people, and not of a stranger* : the same [is] the father of the children of Ammon unto this day. *We read no more of Lot, and hope he repented ; but it was a shameful crime, with the smoke of Sodom before his eyes.*

* Which perhaps they had brought from Zoar.

† Some writers have endeavoured to excuse the scandal of this story, by saying, They were influenced by a desire of being the remote parents of the Messiah ; and urged that they lived chastely in Sodom ; that they joined in the contrivance, which guilty persons in such a case would not do ; and that they perpetuated the fact in the names of the children : but it is to be feared they had no such expectations ; and whatever their pretence was, their conduct was shamefully wicked.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us think of the terrible judgment that shall overtake all the wicked, illustrated by the destruction of Sodom. This was designed to be a standing mark of the displeasure of God against sin, especially the lust of uncleanness ; and it is made an example of the ruin of many nations that rebel against God. Those people suffered the vengeance of eternal fire ; and their destruction is an emblem of that which shall come upon all the ungodly. Accordingly, hell is represented as a lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. They have frequent warnings from the righteous men that live among them, but they are disregarded: Ministers call to sinners to turn and live ; say unto them, as Lot did to his sons, *Up, and get ye out of this place ; but they seem as those that mock ; they think them in jest, or despise their remonstrances.* God's bowels yearn over them, as well as men's ; and he says, *How shall I give thee up ?* but they refuse his offer ; they think themselves secure, till sudden destruction cometh upon them. They are engaged in their worldly concerns or pleasures ; and the sun of prosperity shines brightly upon them ; but the breath of the Lord kindleth a stream of brimstone before they are aware. Our Lord illustrates the destruction of sinners by this story, in *Luke xvii. 28.* Let wicked men promise themselves ever so much peace and happiness, and go on ever so daintily, and impudently in sin, it is certain, as it is expressed *Psal. xi. 6.* *Upon the wicked God shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest.* What a fearful thing is it to fall into the hands of the living God ! who hath such stores of vengeance ; who can kindle a fire in his anger, that shall burn to the lowest hell ! Be warned therefore, O sinners, and escape for your lives to the rock of refuge ; or be assured, as our Lord himself argued, that after all these warnings, *it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for you.*

2. *Remember Lot's wife ;* as Christ exhorts us, *Luke xvii. 32.* She was punished for lingering, when she should have fled ; for loving the things of the world, and turning back from the path which God had appointed. Though the wife of a good man, and remarkably favoured by her deliverance from Sodom, yet she was destroyed, and made a monument of wrath to future generations. Let us fly earnestly for refuge, and lay hold on the hope that is set before us ; guarding against the prevailing love of the world, and sacrificing every thing to the welfare of the soul : *not drawing back, lest it be to perdition ;* but setting our faces Zion-ward, and pressing on to the kingdom of heaven. Linger not in the plains of destruction, or in the practice of sin. God hath declared, *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Let us then forget what is behind, and press on to those things that are before, toward the mark for the prize of our high calling ; consider-

ing, *What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

3. It is a happy thing to be nearly allied to those who are eminent for religion. Lot's sons in law and daughters would have been saved for his sake, if they had taken the warning; but they would not. God saved Lot for Abraham's sake, in answer to the prayers of this his pious relative, v. 29. The relations of good men often fare better for their prayers and intercessions; it is frequently so with regard to temporal concerns, and would be often so in spiritual things, if it were not their own fault. It will therefore be our wisdom to form alliances with those only who *fear God and work righteousness*, and from whose prayers, counsels, and examples we may expect the greatest advantage.

4. We see the odious and ensnaring sin of drunkenness. A certain writer against the scriptures, has ventured to assert, that there is nothing in the Mosaic law to discourage this vice. But, beside several other passages that might be mentioned, this story itself answers that objection. We see how big it is with all manner of mischief. It is bad in itself; dishonourable to our rational natures; an ungrateful abuse of the kindness of God, in giving such things for our refreshment and entertainment; and an inlet to all manner of vice. It makes the tongue pervert right things; and a person, who is in the main good, when overtaken with this fault, may be guilty of such actions as will bring perpetual shame on himself; a great reproach on his profession; and may make him go mourning all his days. Justly does the pious HERBERT say,

* He that is drunken, may his mother kill
Big with his sister: He hath lost the reins,
Is outlaw'd by himself. All kind of ill
Did with his liquor slide into his veins.*

Thus Lot, who had kept himself pure amidst all the debauchery of Sodom, when he was drunk commits incest with his own daughters. A man may be guilty of such faults in similar circumstances, of which, if he were told before, he would say, *Is thy servant a dog, that he should do such things as these?* Persons cannot be too much on their guard against so frequent and so abominable a practice. *Be not drunk with wine wherein there is excess.* But if men will, with such instances as these before their eyes, go on to add drunkenness to thirst, make a god of their belly, and dethrone their reason, let them remember what the apostle declares, that such persons *shall not inherit the kingdom of God*. Let us conclude with the exhortation of our Lord in Luke xxi. 34. *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.*

CHAP. XX.

The progress of Abraham's history hath been a little interrupted by the account of the destruction of Sodom ; but here we return to it again, and find him a second time denying his wife ; Abimelech takes her ; is reprov'd of God for it ; and, after expostulating, with Abraham, restores her to him..

1. **A**ND Abraham, after residing at Mamre fourteen years, journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between the two deserts Kadeah and Shur, and so-journ'd in Gerar, a city of the Philistines, south of Canaan.*
- 2 And Abraham unaccountably fell into the same sin which he had before been guilty of in Egypt, and said of Sarah his wife, She [is] my sister : and Abimelech† king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah : she was still beautiful, though ninety years old ; and the
- 3 king took her, perhaps by force, to make her his wife. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou [art but] a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken, if thou restore her not ; for she [is] a man's
- 4 wife. But Abimelech had not come near her : and, being thus made sensible of the wrong he had done, and fearful lest his people should suffer for it, he said, LORD, wilt thou slay also a
- 5 righteous nation, who are innocent as to this point ? Said he not unto me, She [is] my sister ? and she, even she herself said, He [is] my brother : in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this ; I had no adulterous design in the least in it ; I meant nothing but what was honest.
- 6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart ; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me : therefore suffered I thee not
- 7 to touch her. Now therefore restore the man [his] wife ; for he [is] a prophet, an interpreter of my will, and one who is very dear to me, therefore the injury done to him I consider as done to myself ; and if thou wilt restore her, he shall pray for thee, and I will hear him, and thou shalt live : and if thou restore [her] not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that [are] thine. Thus God reprov'd kings for his
- 8 sake. Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears : and the men were sore afraid.
- 9 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us ? how great a danger hast thou exposed us to ! and in what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin, or frun-

* Probably the stretch of the lake was disagreeable, and Lot's incest had brought a reproach upon him and his religion.

† A name common to all the kings of Palestine, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt. It signifies, my father is king. Calmet, Edit.

- to him? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done, that were neither honourable nor justifiable.* And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What levity or impurity sawest thou in us, that thou hast done this thing, *that hath moved thee to deal thus with us?* And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God, a principle of real religion, [is] not in this place : *they will be guilty of any violence, and perhaps they will slay me for my wife's sake.* And yet indeed [she is] my sister ; she [is] the grand daughter of my father Terah, but not the daughter of my mother ; and she became my wife.*
- 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This [is] thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me ; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He [is] my brother.†
- 14 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and men servants, and women servants, and gave [them] unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech, *being glad to have such a prophet, and such a friend of God near him,* said, Behold, my land [is] before thee : dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, *by way of reproof,* Behold, I have given him *whom thou didst call thy brother* a thousand [pieces] of silver : ‡ behold, he [is] to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that [are] with thee, and with all [other ;] a defence of thy chastity, to secure thee from the eyes and addresses of all others ; and therefore own him hereafter : thus she was reproved.¶
- 17 So Abraham prayed unto God : and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid servants, *of the indisposition under which they laboured ;* and they bare [children.] For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife ; *God by some righteous judgment had smitten them with barrenness.*

REFLECTIONS.

WE should be cautious of relapsing into those sins that we have been convinced of and humbled for. Abraham did so ; and his guilt was aggravated by God's having formerly appeared for him in Pharaoh's court. It was strange that he should dissemble again, when he had seen the vision of God since that time, and had the promise of a child by Sarah too ; yet he relapsed again. *Lord, what is man !* How painful is it to

* When Haran, her own father, died, she lived with Terah, her grandfather, who was also Abraham's father ; and thus living as brother and sister in the same family, in time she became his wife.

† Abraham alleges it was his common practice, and therefore he did not design to affront Abimelech ; but it was done with a design to deceive, and therefore unjustifiable and sinful.

‡ About one hundred and twenty five pounds.

¶ Or, as it is much better rendered by Dr. Kennicott, and in all things speak the truth. Remarks, p. 22. Edit.

observe the father of the faithful repeatedly equivocating ! Let us avoid this sin, and especially be on our guard in those instances in which we have fallen before. Past miscarriages should be as marks to prevent our making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

2. It is a great comfort to preserve the testimony of our own conscience ; so Abimelech did. He had no ill design, no intention of injuring Abraham or Sarah. Polygamy was reckoned unlawful even in those days. Let us keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man. It will be our rejoicing in the day of evil : and then, *if our hearts condemn us not, we shall have confidence toward God.* If he knows that we act in the integrity of our hearts, it is happy for us, whether men will own it or not. *Those who walk uprightly, walk surely ;* and they may humbly hope, that God will keep them from sinning against him, when they desire to know their duty, and avoid the appearance of evil.

3. We should acknowledge it as a great mercy to be restrained from sin, though it should be by affliction. God often makes use of afflicting providences as a means of curing vicious inclinations ; and thus he takes away the opportunity of our doing evil. Those afflictions that keep us from sin are blessings indeed. God should be praised for restraining grace ; and it should be our daily prayer, *that he would not permit us to fall into temptation, but that he would deliver us from evil.*

4. The fear of God is a good restraint from sin v. 11. Abraham thought, *Surely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake.* The want of this principle introduces all manner of confusion. Justly do our indictments say, concerning criminals, that they do so and so, *not having the fear of God.* There is no good to be expected without this. David says, *Psalms xxxvi. 1. The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes ;* whatever they profess, their conduct saith so. An holy awe of God will keep us from sin, as in the case of Nehemiah, *This did not I because of the fear of the Lord.* If therefore we would avoid sin, and every appearance of evil, let us *be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*

5. Sometimes it is a snare to us to have a bad opinion of others, and to suspect their characters more than we ought. Abraham suspected Abimelech, but without reason. He appears to have been a man of great wisdom, judgment, and integrity ; not an idolater, but a worshipper of the true God, as Melchizedek was. God conversed with him by dreams, and thus made known his will to him. It seems that he abhorred adultery, and had he known that Sarah was another man's wife, would not have attempted to take her. Perhaps Abraham might think, that Abimelech and his people did not fear God, because they were not circumcised ; had not the seal of God's covenant ; or did not offer sacrifices, or not such sacrifices as he did. Uncharitableness leads to other sins ; particularly, to take wrong

methods to secure ourselves ; *charity hopeth all things*. ' There are,' says Mr. HENRY, ' many persons that have more of the fear of God in their hearts than we think. Perhaps they are not called by our dividing names, nor wear our badges. They are not of our opinion, and therefore we conclude that they have not the fear of God in their hearts. But this is injurious both to Christ and christians, and makes us obnoxious to the divine judgment.' Once more,

6. Let us learn to temper our rebukes with gentleness and kindness ; thus Abimelech did. Men are apt to be displeased at a reproof, however just it may be ; and therefore we ought to mingle it with kindness : when we do so, they will hearken the better, and believe we have a good design. Many a reproof loses its force, by being delivered with too much heat. Men are ready to think that zeal for God and holiness will vindicate this ; but they are mistaken. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*. Let us then in meekness instruct those who oppose themselves, and with gentleness reprove those who do amiss ; and endeavour, by real kindness, to show that we wish them well, and should be glad to see them happy. An arrow winged with love is most likely to reach the heart. So God deals with us, and so should we deal with each other.

CHAP. XXI.

We are now entering upon the history of Isaac, who is one of the most perfect characters of the Old Testament. This chapter contains an account of his birth ; how Ishmael was cast out ; of a treaty made between Abraham and Abimelech ; and of Abraham's solemn devotion,

- 1 **A**ND the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken, *that is, performed his promise*. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him : *for this reason Isaac is said to have been born by promise*.
- 3 *And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac, that is, laughter,*
- 4 *because of the joy he had in him*. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, being eight days old, as God had commanded
- 5 him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him, *and Sarah ninety years old*.
- 6 And Sarah said, God hath made me, *who once foolishly laughed through distrust, to laugh for joy ; holy gratitude fills my heart* : [so that] all that hear will laugh with me *and rejoice*
- 7 *at his birth*. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck ? *who would*

have ventured to assert so improbable a thing? none but God; and he hath fulfilled his word; for I have born [him] a son in his old age, and can suckle and nourish it from my own breast.

- 9 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the [same] day that Isaac was weaned.*
- 10 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had borne unto Abraham, *mocking; perhaps at the great feast, and jeering Isaac in some malignant bitter way, as their young master, he that, forsooth, must be heir of all; this made Paul call it persecution, Gal. iv. 29. Perhaps he was put on by Hagar, who thought her son, who was the firstborn, should be the heir.*
- 11 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, *I cannot bear this insolent behaviour, and therefore beseech you to cast out this bondwoman, and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, [even] with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, because of his love to his son, and God's promises concerning him, and lest he should be exposed to danger and idolatry.* And God said unto Abraham, *Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Isaac, as heir to thy house, shall bear and propagate thy name: and the promised seed, and spiritual prerogatives shall be entailed upon him. Heb. xi. 18.* And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, *as I have promised, because he*
- 12 [is] thy seed. And Abraham, *to show his readiness to obey the divine command,* rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave [it] unto Hagar, putting [it] on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.†
- 13 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went and sat her down over against [him] a good way off, as it were a bow shot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against [him,] and lift up her voice, and wept, *God did not design that they should perish, but that they should be brought to repentance; And therefore God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for*
- 14 God hath heard the voice of the lad where he [is.] Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make
- 15 him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, *which was there before, though she saw it not, by reason of grief, or some other cause; and she went and filled*

* Not the day he was circumcised, that would have interrupted their regard to this religious rite; but the day he was weaned, when the mother and child were both stronger.

† This might be done to humble both herself and her son for their improper conduct, and to be an emblem of her posterity, who should wander in the wilderness.

- 20 the bottle with water, and gave the lad to drink. And God was with the lad, *blessed him in temporal things*; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer, a skilful
 21 hunter of beasts and warrior with men, (*ch. xvi. 12.*) And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.*
- 22 And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God [is] with thee in all that thou doest: Now, therefore,
 23 let us enter into a league of friendship and mutual kindness; swear unto me here by God, that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son nor with my son's son: [but] according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.
- 24 And Abraham consented and said, I will swear. And Abraham
 25 reproved Abimelech, or, debated the matter with him, because of a well of water, which was exceeding valuable in that country, and which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.
- 26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing, I am quite ignorant of the affair: neither didst thou tell me, or I would have redressed the grievance; neither yet heard I [of it,]
 27 but today. And Abraham, out of gratitude for former favours, took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant, according to the custom of
 28 the country. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What [mean] these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?
 29 And he said, For [these] seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well, and a token of our agreement in this matter.
- 31 Wherefore he called that place Beersheba, that is the well of
 32 the oath; because there they swore both of them. Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phicol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.
- 23 And [Abraham] planted a grove in Beersheba, for peace and retirement, and a shelter from the heat; or rather, for public worship, as a tent could not hold his large family: and he called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. This practice was afterwards abused to superstition and idolatry, and therefore forbidden, *Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. xvi. 21.* And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days, or years.

* It is probable that he often saw Abraham afterwards, and had gifts from him; and we find in *chap. xcy. 6.* that he was at his father's funeral.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us patiently and cheerfully wait for God's promise, after the example of Abraham and Sarah, who staggered not through unbelief. *Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. Heb. xi. 11. 12.* Thus their desire was answered, and what they expected came to pass. *Faithful is he who hath promised*, and at the set time his promise was fulfilled. v. 2. God is punctual to his word, and his time is the best ; let us therefore wait for it, and not prescribe to him.

2. Parents should cheerfully devote their children to the service of God. Abraham circumcised Isaac and complied with the divine appointment. However dear Isaac was, it must be done. Let parents enter their children into God's family, and be thankful that he will admit them. As the promise is to us and our children, let us see to it that we put them in the way of God's blessing, and devote them early to him.

3. From the example of Sarah, we may infer the duty of mothers to nurse their own children. The good women of those days thought it their duty to do so, and dry breasts were reckoned a great reproach. Sarah was a person of quality, of great eminence, had a large family, and many cares ; they had three hundred and eighteen servant men beside women ; and yet thought that no excuse. She had women enough to nurse it in her house, and was herself aged, being ninety years old ; but she did it herself, and speaks of it with the greatest pleasure. It is a refinement of this last age for women to consign that work to strangers ; which is a very cruel and barbarous practice, and shows the mind to be almost destitute of natural affection. The Lord himself says this, *Lam. iv. 3. Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones : but the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness, who leave their young to be hatched and brought up by others.* It is a practice directly contrary to the dictates of nature, and the clear intention of Providence. Neither quality, nor business, nor difficulties, nor inconveniences, will excuse for the neglect of this plain duty ; and what God hath made a duty, we may hope he will give strength to perform, as multitudes would experience, if they would but try : nothing but evident necessity can vindicate so unnatural a custom. These were the sentiments of Archbishop TILLOTSON, who says, " It is a natural duty ; and because it is so, of more necessity and indispensable obligation than any positive precept of revealed religion, such as baptism, or the like ; and that the general neglect of it, is one of the great and crying

sins of this age and nation ; and the world is not likely to be better till this great fault is mended.

4. It is no new thing for the servants of God to be hated and persecuted : this is Paul's reflection in *Gal. iv. 29.* for *as then* (speaking of Isaac and Ishmael) *he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now.* God's favourites are often the world's laughing stock : but let them not think that any strange thing hath happened to them, if they are sometimes made a jest of, and despised ; for so Christ was, so were his apostles, so have good men been in all ages : yea, and *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* But let them learn to bear up with patience under this common lot of good men : God will remember and recompense them at last.

5. See how easily God can chastise and bring down the haughtiest spirit. So he did that of Hagar and Ishmael ; they grew insolent in Abraham's family, and therefore were expelled. When driven into the wilderness and almost perishing for want of food and water, she no doubt began to wish herself in Abraham's house again ; and would have been thankful for the crumbs that fell from her old master's table. Thus many foolish servants throw themselves out of comfortable places and families, by their pride and insolence : and have often cause to repent it bitterly, when it is too late. A meek and humble behaviour is the way to secure the favour of God and men.

6. Learn to cultivate friendships with those who are the friends of God : so Abimelech did with Abraham. When we see that God is with his servants in all they do, *v. 22.* let us covet their friendship. He sometimes so blesses and prospers them, that others cannot but see it. It is good to be the friends of those who have an interest in heaven ; who can counsel us, and pray for us. The scriptures declare, that in the latter days the Jews should be so favoured of God, that their neighbours should say, *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. Enter not therefore into the path of the wicked,* but endeavour to be a companion of those who fear God, and have his presence and blessing with them.

7. Let us, after the example of Abraham, call on the name of the everlasting God. Consider him in this view ; as the eternal *JEHOVAH* : *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth was formed, from everlasting to everlasting THOU art the same.* Let this fill our souls with a holy awe and veneration of him. Whenever we approach him we should consider him as God, the LORD, the everlasting God, who was, and is, and is to come. Whatever creature comforts perish and decay, though we ourselves die, though heaven and earth pass away, yet he is the same, and of his years there shall be no end. Let us therefore, with the profoundest veneration, worship him who liveth for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAP. XXII.

Contains a most surprising story, as much admired, and as much found fault with, as any part of scripture. We have here the command to Abraham to offer up his son ; his readiness to obey ; how the execution was prevented, and another sacrifice substituted in his room ; a considerable promise renewed to Abraham ; and some account of the family of Nahor.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass after these things, *which happened at Beersheba, and all his troubles and mercies, and after God had given him a son according to his promise, that God did tempt Abraham, tried the strength of his faith and obedience, that it might be better known both to himself and others ;* and God said unto him, Abraham : and he said, Behold,
- 2 [here] I [am.] And he said, Take now thy son, thine only [son] Isaac, *the promised seed, whom thou lovest, who is the joy of thy old age, and get thee into the land of Moriah ;** and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.†
- 3 And Abraham, *all silence and submission, and to show his readiness to obey,* rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood, *which he probably carried with him, for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place*
- 4 of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off ; *the divine*
- 5 *Shekinah or glory perhaps resting upon it.* And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass ; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. *This was no equivocation, for he firmly believed that God would*
- 6 *restore him his son again.* And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid [it] upon Isaac his son ; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife ; and they went both of
- 7 them together. And Isaac, *who was well acquainted with the nature of religious services,* spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father : and he said, Here [am] I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood : but where is the
- 8 lamb for a burnt offering ? And Abraham, *though no doubt much affected with Isaac's question, made a most prudent reply,* and said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a
- 9 burnt offering : so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of ; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and

* A range of hills, some of which lay in Jerusalem, others near it ; and among them were Calvary and the Mount of Olives.

† Probably on Calvary, where Christ was afterward crucified.

- found Isaac his son,* and laid him on the altar upon the wood. *There now, lies Abraham's joy, Sarah's delight, and the heir of the promise, all meek and resigned to the fatal stroke.* And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. *And now the trial being made, and the and answered, the order is countermanded.*
- 11 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham : and he said, Here [am] I.
- 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him : for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son] from me ! *thou hast given me the highest proof of thy faith and obedience, and shown to me, and to all who shall hear of this, that thou art a proper subject for my choicest benefits.* And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, there was behind [him] a ram, *strayed from the rest of the flock, and directed hither by God's providence, and he was caught in a thicket by his horns :* and Abraham with great thankfulness and joy, went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh, *the Lord will see, or provide :* as it is said [to] this day, In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen : *this became a proverbial expression, to signify, that in the greatest difficulties God will take care of his servants.*
- 15 And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, *after he had done offering the sacrifice,*
- 16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son,
- 17 thine only [son :] That in blessing I will bless thee, *greatly and abundantly bless thee,* and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed, *Isaac's posterity,* as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea shore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ; *he shall have dominion over*
- 18 them ;† And in thy seed, *that is Christ,* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed my voice.
- 19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba ; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.
- 20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also borne chil-

* No doubt Abraham had now informed his son of the divine command ; Isaac neither contradicted nor resisted ; he was now near thirty years old, and was strong enough to have opposed, and young enough to have fled from his father ; yet the pious youth did neither, but willingly yielded up himself ; wherein he was a type of Christ and a pattern for us.

† This was fulfilled, as to the temporal part, in the time of *Jehoyah, David, &c.* but especially and spiritually in the *Messiah.* *Psal. viii. 9. Dan. ii. 44, 45. 1 Cor. xv. 57. Gal. iii. 13.*

21 dren unto thy brother Nabor ;* Huz his firstborn, and Buz
 22 his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, And Chesed,
 23 and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethual. And Betha-
 el-begat Rebekah, who was afterwards Isaac's wife : these
 24 eight Milcah did bear to Nabor Abraham's brother. And
 his concubine,† whose name [was] Reumah, she bare also
 Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maacah.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn from the example of Abraham, who gave up his son, his only son whom he loved, to be willing to give up our dearest comforts to God. He gave him to be sacrificed ; yea, himself was willing to sacrifice him with his own hands, when he thought it to be the will of the Lord. Thus should we give up our comforts to God, from whom we have received them. Parents should resign their children to the disposal of heaven ; give up their *supposed* interest to their *true* interest : always observe the will of God, and he will bring good out of evil. Let us maintain a full persuasion of the justice and mercy of God, that we may not scruple to give up our dearest comforts to his disposal ; and if he is pleased to take our friends or children away, by the severest strokes, let us say, as *Eli* did, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* ; 2 Sam. iii. 18. And our Lord requires us to be ready to make the same surrender as Abraham did ; *If any man come to me, and hate not (be not willing to abandon) his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* Luke xiv. 26. We must daily say, Lord, here am I, what wouldst thou have me to do ? It will be of no avail to oppose the divine will ; *Who hath hardened himself against God, and prospered ?* But God is well pleased when we humbly submit to his appointment, and say, *without reserve, Thy will be done.* He can make up the want of those comforts which he takes away, by giving us cheerful hope that they are removed to a better world ; by affording us peace and pleasure in our own spirits ; and improving our graces by it. Abraham intended to offer his son, and God promised that his seed should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, or the sands upon the sea shore. Whatever we part with for God and Christ, we shall be no losers by, at least we shall be none in the end. Perhaps Abraham was too fond of Isaac, and therefore he made him undergo this severe trial. If our lives are bound up in the lives of our children or friends, God may take them away. If this should be the case, let us still say, with the pious Shunamite, who, when she was asked, *Is it well ?* answered, *It is well ; well,*

* This genealogy is added here to introduce Rebekah.

† Concubines were not full and complete wives, not being solemnly betrothed, nor sharing in the government of the family, but subject to the lawful wives, and therefore called servants, chap. xxxii. 22.

for God doth it ; he hath wise ends in doing it, and great good shall come out of it ; and therefore, *not as we will, but as thou wilt.* This will have a great tendency to remove our doubts and fears ; it will be a proof of our own sincerity, and a strong testimony that we fear God, and love him.

3. Let us imitate Abraham in his prudence and readiness in this affair : his prudence, in leaving the young men behind ; in not telling Isaac or Sarah ; his readiness, in not consulting flesh and blood. *Abraham, take now thy son ;* Abraham rose up early and took his son. Who but Abraham could have forborne to remonstrate and plead upon such an occasion ? “ Lord,” might he have said, ‘ must I lose my child, lose him almost as soon as I have received him ? Didst thou give him only to tantalize thy servant ? Remember, gracious God, the name he bears ; *How* shall he answer its cheering import ? *How* shall he be the source of satisfaction to his parents, and the father of many nations, if thou takest him away in the morning of his days ? If sin lieth at the door, let me expiate the guilt ; let thousands of rams, every bullock in my stall, bleed on thy altar ; my wealth, blessed Lord, and all my goods, are nothing in comparison with my Isaac : command me to be stripped of all my possessions, and beg my bread, and I will bless thy holy name : only let my child, my dear child, be spared. Or, if nothing will avert thy indignation but human blood, let my death be the sacrifice ; upon me be the vengeance. — I am old and gray headed ; the best of my days are past, and the best of my services are done ; if this tottering wall tumble, there will be little or no cause for regret ; but the pillar of my house, the foundation of my hope, if he be snatched from me, how shall I support life, or what good will my life do me ? *O my son, my son, would to God I might die for thee !* If it must be a blooming youth, in the prime of his strength, be pleased to fetch it from some fruitful family ; there are those who have many, while I have but this one little lamb, the solace of my soul, and the stay of my declining years ; and shall *this* be taken away, while all *those* are left ? Or if the decree cannot be reversed, if it must be the fruit of my body, O that it might be Ishmael, the son of my handmaid ! Yet my heart bleeds at the thought of *his* untimely death ; but as for Isaac, the son of my beloved spouse, the son of my old age, the crown of my labours, I shall never survive such a loss ! Yet, if he must die, and there is no remedy, may not some common distemper loosen the cords of life, and let him down gently into the grave ? may not his mother and myself seal his closing eyes, and soften his dying pangs by our tender offices ? ” “ No, Abraham, thy son must be sacrificed on the altar.” “ Well, if all must be executed, (he might say) God grant that these eyes may never behold the dismal tragedy : if my Isaac must be bound hand and foot for the slaughter, if he must receive

the steel into his bosom, and walter in his innocent blood, heaven forbid that I should behold so dismal a spectacle ! " Alas ! Abraham, this mitigation cannot be granted ; thy own hand must point the deadly weapon at his breast, and urge its way through the gushing veins and shivering flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart : the father, the father must be the executioner." ' Unheard of action ! How can I answer it to the wife of my bosom, the mother of the lovely youth ? How can I justify it to the world ? Will they not take up a taunting proverb, and say, at every turn, There goes the man, the monster, that imbrued his hand in his own son's blood ; this is he that pretends to piety, and yet could kill his own son in cold blood ; kill a good, a dutious son, an only child.' Thus Abraham might naturally have pleaded ; but, astonishing to tell, he made no reply, he said nothing of all this ; but quietly and patiently submitted. Through all the three days' journey, every moment fire and blood presented themselves to his view. Isaac's conversation increased his grief ; yet it was the *divine command* ; he resolved therefore to obey, however contrary it was to flesh and blood. This was the *father of the faithful*, this the *friend of God*. Go ye, and do likewise. Make haste to obey every command of the Lord your God. Beware of every thing that would prevent your following him fully. The greatest resignation appears in giving up those comforts that are most valuable, and which we are ready to think ourselves miserable without. Abraham breaks through all objections, so should we. Let us be willing to deny ourselves, to suffer persecution, to give up every idol, the favour of friends, or fortune, or good name ; give up any thing, yea, every thing, that would hinder us in the way and works of God. Here show your courage, your resolution, your faith, your sincerity. Be prudent, like Abraham, and steady herein, and be assured God will be gracious to you. *In the mount of difficulty shall the Lord be seen* : our extremity is God's opportunity. God's voice was never so sweet to Abraham as now ; his love is never so welcome as when it comes after submission to his will ; and whenever this is the case, *God will not forget our labours of love*, but amply and eternally reward them.

3. Let us learn, like Isaac, to be willing to die when and how God pleases. God is the sovereign of life and death, and may remove his creatures to another world, when and by what means he will ; and as to his faithful servants he will certainly do it in the best manner. On a conviction of God's overruling providence, and disposing all events, of life and death, let us trust in him, and leave it to him to order the time, manner, and circumstances of our removal. *While we live, let us live to the Lord*. May our lives be devoted to God, and spent in a holy, humble, and useful manner ; then death will be comfortable ; comfortable whenever it comes, and however it comes. When we die, we shall die by the hand of God ; die, as it were, on Pisgah's

top, from whence we may see the heavenly world, the glories of which are so great, that it is worth while to submit to, yea, to rejoice in, the sharpest pangs of death that open a way to it ; remembering, as Abraham and Isaac believed, that we shall rise again. Though absent from the body for a while, yet we shall receive it again, improved and beautified ; when we shall have no more of these painful exercises, no more trials of our faith and obedience.

4. Let us adore the love of God, in not sparing his only Son, but giving him up for us. There is much of Christ in this chapter. Now, says the angel, *I know that thou fearest God* : and may we not see here an evident proof of the love of God toward us, in that he hath not spared his own son, but given him up to death for us all ? The sufferings of Christ are represented as the act of God ; *it pleased the Lord to bruise him for us, and to lay on him the iniquity of us all*. Sinners were doomed to be sacrificed, to be slain, and made miserable for ever ; but God hath provided a lamb for a burnt offering ; the contrivance is his own ; no angelic spirit could have done it ; infinite wisdom alone could contrive it ; infinite love alone could execute it. Abraham received remarkable favours from God, though he had been guilty of many transgressions against him ; he was therefore bound in gratitude to give up his son at his command, at least to bear it patiently, as a punishment for his sin. But God was under no obligations to us ; yet he says, *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts*. Jesus, like Isaac, made no reply, but said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God*. Like Isaac he was bound before he was sacrificed, and like him cheerfully submitted to the fatal stroke, expressing no reluctance. He made his soul an offering for sin, and died, the just for the unjust. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and gave up his only Son to be a sacrifice for us, &c.* The mount on which Isaac was to have been sacrificed was Moriah, probably the very spot of ground on which Christ was crucified ; at least, it was very near it : and no doubt this command to Abraham was designed, among other important reasons, to be typical of this great event. Let us admire and adore the love of God, that he gave his dear, his well beloved and only Son, the most pure and innocent being, to become a sacrifice for our sins. *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift !* Let this love greatly affect our minds ; especially at those seasons when Christ is set forth as crucified before us ; when we see him bleeding and dying in the room and for the sake of sinners. Was Abraham's love so great and remarkable, the wonder of the church, and a pleasing spectacle to angels ? What is the love of God to us then, and how should it fill our souls with the highest raptures and transports of joy !

CHAP. XXIII.

An account of Sarah's age and death ; of Abraham's purchasing a burying place ; and Sarah's funeral : which circumstances, though of small importance in themselves, were of great consequence, as they fixed Abraham and his posterity to the promised land, and by this he took possession of it.

- 1 **A**ND Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old : [these were] the years of the life of Sarah.*
- 2 And Sarah died in Kirjatharba ; the same [is] Hebron in the land of Canaan :† and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah in her tent, and to weep for her ; to make a public lamentation, as was common upon such occasions.
- 3 And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, the governors or elders of the Hittites,
- 4 saying, I [am] a stranger and a sojourner with you : give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord ; thou [art] a mighty prince among us, a prince of God, a person of great power or estate, and a favourite of heaven ; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead ; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.
- 7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, [even] to the children of Heth, the governors of the people.‡ And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight ; hear me,
- 9 and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, or, the double cave, which he hath, which [is] in the end of his field ; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a burying
- 10 place among you. And Ephron dwelt or sat among the children of Heth : And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, [even] of all
- 11 that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me : the field give I thee, and the cave that [is] therein, I give it thee ; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee : bury thy dead. *This was indeed a generous offer.*
- 12 And Abraham, in return for this civility which was shown him,
- 13 bowed himself down before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou [wilt give it,] if thou be the possessor of the land, and wilt part with it, I pray thee hear

* She is the only woman whose age is recorded in scripture.

† When they removed there is uncertain.

‡ Religion not only allows, but requires civility, and those gestures which express it.

- me : I will give thee money for the field ; take [it] of me,
 14 and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered
 15 Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me : the
 land [is worth] *only* four hundred shekels of silver ; * what [is]
 that betwixt me and thee ? *it is a present hardly worth your*
 16 *acceptance ;* bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham heark-
 ened unto Ephron ; and *being perfectly satisfied with the*
terms, Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had
 named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred
 17 shekels of silver, current [money] with the merchant. And
 the field of Ephron, which [was] in Machpelah, which [was]
 before Mamre, the field, and the cave which [was] therein,
 and all the trees that [were] in the field, that [were] in all
 18 the borders *or fences* round about, were made sure Unto
 Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of
 Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city ; *Ephron*
accepted the money in the sight of these witnesses ; and thus the
field was made over to Abraham and his posterity.
 19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave
 of the field of Machpelah before Mamre : the same [is]
 20 Hebron in the land of Canaan.† And the field, and the cave
 that [is] therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a pos-
 session of a burying place, by the sons of Heth.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW awful a change does death make in our dearest comforts ! Sarah, the mother of the faithful, must die. Though Abraham and she lived happy together for many years, death parts them. Sarah appears to have been beautiful, and it is very uncommon for beauty to last to so great an age ; but she at last dies, and so must all her daughters. Let them be solicitous then, to secure those inward beauties of the mind, which shall live, not only when age withers their countenances, but when death shall destroy their bodies. Abraham is obliged to say, *Bury my dead out of my sight.* When those, who once delighted our eyes, become ghastly and loathsome, we shall be glad to remove them to the land of darkness. We may lawfully mourn over them, and indeed ought to do so ; and be humbled for sin, that brought death into the world, which changes the loveliest pieces of human nature into loathsomeness and corruption. Let us rejoice in the prospect of life and immortality by Christ Jesus ; *when these vile bodies shall be changed, this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal, immortality, and death shall be swallowed up of life.*

* About forty five pounds of our money ; but some say only twenty five pounds.

† Several of Abraham's descendants desired afterward to be buried there, to intimate their faith in the future possession of the land of Canaan.

2. Observe how amiable civility and generosity appear. To refuse the common forms of civility, is no part of religion, but shows a great deal of pride ; if they have no great meaning, there is no harm in them. Abraham was a man of distinguished gravity and piety, a friend of God, and the father of the faithful, yet he used the greatest respect to others. A rude, clownish behaviour, is as inconsistent with the gospel as with common decency. Abraham's behaviour might shame many christians ; yea, the children of Heth teach the sons of God good manners. The generosity of Abraham is remarkable, who would not take the advantage of a sudden generous offer, but was willing to pay a full equivalent. Let us be ready to serve and oblige, but never impose upon those who are friendly and generous, nor show a niggardly, selfish disposition, which is a dishonour to religion, and detrimental to our comforts and interests. May we practise these amiable virtues, as we desire to partake of Abraham's blessing.

3. How different was the manner in which Abraham took possession of the earthly and the heavenly Canaan ! God had given him the whole land ; but the time to take possession was not yet come ; therefore, without any distrust of the divine promise, or renunciation of his right, he bought a parcel for his present necessity. In the earthly Canaan, his first possession was a burying place, in which his beloved wife was deposited ; and it was the only spot of it that ever was in his own actual possession. Into the heavenly Canaan he entered as a triumphant spirit, and partook of the entertainment which God had there provided for those that love him. There is a grave at the end of every earthly possession ; and we must soon follow our friends whom we have laid in the dust. Let us then be looking to, and preparing for, that better country, that is, the heavenly one ; whence, not only sorrow and sighing, but even death itself, shall be for ever banished. *There all good men shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of their heavenly Father, and go out no more.*

CHAP. XXIV. 1—28.

In this chapter are some further particulars about Abraham's family, and the settlement of Isaac ; which teach us, that 'if we acknowledge God in all our ways, he will direct our paths.'

- 1 **A**ND Abraham was old, [and] well stricken in age, *an hundred and forty years old* : and the LORD had blessed
- 2 Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, *Eliezer of Damascus*, (*ch. xv. 2.*) that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, *in token of subjection, and as a promise of faithful service* : And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of

- heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son, *not persuade him to take a wife, of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, because they are a cursed race; (ch. ix. 25.) and devoted to destruction:*
- 4 But thou shalt go unto my country, *Mesopotamia*, and to my kindred, to my brother Nahor, *who has many children, and, though among idolaters, they worship the true God; (ch. xxxi. 53.)* and take a wife unto my son Isaac from thence. And the servant, *who was a pious, prudent man, and desirous to know the obligation of his oath,* said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I therefore needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? *must Isaac go and dwell there?* And Abraham, *warmly protesting against that,* said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again; *he must by no means settle there. However, I have authority to say,*
- 7 The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence; *thy journey shall be prosperous, and thou shalt succeed in the business.* And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from the obligation of this my oath: only bring not
- 9 my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.
- 10 And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master [were] in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor, *that is, Haran, where Nahor lived, (ch. xxviii. 10. xxix. 4.)* And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, [even] the time that women go out to draw [water.]
- 12 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham, *in providing a wife for Isaac, and making thy choice plain to me; and in order to this,* Behold, I stand [here] by the well of water; and the daughters of the men
- 14 of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: [let the same be] she [that] thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master. *This he desired, not out of presumption or distrust, but by a secret instinct of God's Spirit; justly concluding, that one who was*

diligent and industrious in drawing water, and affable and kind to strangers, would make Isaac a good wife.

- 15 And God heard his prayer : And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's
16 brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel [was] very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her : and she went down to the well, and filled
17 her pitcher, and came up. And the servant *Eli*zer ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of
18 thy pitcher. And she, *seeing by his attendants and camels that he was a person of eminence, addressed him with respect, and* said, Drink, my lord : and she hastened, and let down her
19 pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, *in the most obliging manner,* I will draw [water] for thy camels also, until they have done
20 drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw [water,] and drew
21 for all his camels. And the man wondering at her, *to see how all things succeeded according to his desire, held his peace, to wit, to mark every circumstance, and consider closely, whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.*
22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring, *or jewel for the forehead,* of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten [shekels] weight of gold, *in value about eighteen pounds five shillings of our money ;* And said, Whose daughter [art] thou ?
23 tell me, I pray thee : is there room [in] thy father's house for us to lodge in ? And she said unto him, I [am] the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.
24 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord ; *seeing that she was all he could wish for, fair and healthy, humble and diligent, courteous and obliging, he concluded that his prayer was heard.*
25 And he said, Blessed [be] the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth : I [being] in the way, the Lord led me to the
26 house of my master's brethren. And the damsel ran, and told [them of] her mother's house these things.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T is a great part of parental kindness and duty, to settle their children with suitable companions in life. This was a very important affair, and lay much upon Abraham's thoughts. He recommended the care of it to a faithful servant, in a very solemn manner. He chose to match his son in a family which had the fear of God. So great a man as Abraham might, no doubt, have had a rich wife for his son among some noble family of the Canaanites; but he knew that *they were sinners before the Lord*, and doomed to destruction, and was fearful lest they should be a snare to the soul of his child. Is it not strange that so many parents in these days should make the welfare of the soul the least concern to be regarded, in disposing of their children? that they should mind every thing but *the one thing needful*? The only inquiry with many, is, whether a man or woman be rich? not whether they fear God and work righteousness; not whether they have the amiable virtues which Rebekah discovered? When we hear persons speaking of the marriage of their neighbours, the only thing said is, that they have such and such fortunes, and are in such circumstances. Ah! when will parents be wise for the souls of their children, and seek alliances for them with those who will help and forward them in the way to heaven? If parents would lay it down as a maxim, to consent to no proposal for their children, but in behalf of those who, as far as they can judge, are truly serious and holy, the world would soon be mended, and the rising generation, in most families, would be *a seed to serve the Lord*. An alliance with those of our own sentiments in religious matters, is most likely to be comfortable and agreeable; but I do not see how it is possible those alliances should be so, where one party is going to heaven, and the other to hell.

2. Let us learn in all our ways to acknowledge God, and submit to his guidance and direction: so Abraham and his servant did. May we set the Lord always before us, and seek wisdom from him; especially let us do it when entering upon new relations, and the most important concerns of life; then we shall be likely to have God's blessing; and he will send his angel before us, and make our way prosperous. We, like Abraham, should learn from former experience, to trust in him; we should plead his promises as a ground of that trust; and *have our eyes ever toward the Lord*, who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, and knows who and what is best for us. We learn also that his providence extends to the most minute events, and it will be our wisdom in all our affairs to follow it. So Rebekah did. Her's was far from being a rash and hasty resolution. How long she staid with her parents after she had agreed to the proposal, is uncertain; but Providence so remarkably pointed out her way, that it

would have been impiety to have delayed. If we desire to follow God fully, and do his will, we may hope that he will make the path of duty plain before our face, and lead us in the way in which we should go.

3. Let us accustom ourselves to ejaculatory prayer, and lifting up our hearts to God : Abraham's servant did so several times. It is a good thing to keep God always in our thoughts ; and in every instance in which we receive mercy from his hand, to dart forth a grateful ascription of praise to him, who deals bountifully with us. This will prepare us to receive further mercy ; and we may hope that God will make our journey through life prosperous. Thus are we to pray without ceasing, and in every thing to give thanks.

CHAP. XXIV. 29, to the end.

- 29 **A**ND Rebekah had a brother, and his name [was] Laban : and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.
- 30 And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me ; that he came unto the man ; and, behold, he stood by the
- 31 camels at the well. And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD, whom God hath so eminently favoured and blessed : wherefore standest thou without ? for I have prepared the
- 32 house, and room for the camels. And the man came into the house : and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the men's feet that [were] with him ; for in those hot countries
- 33 they went either barefoot, or with sandals only. And there was set [meat] before him to eat ; but he said, I will not eat until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.
- 34 35 And he said, I [am] Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly ; and he is become great : and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men servants, and maid servants, and camels, and asses. And
- 36 Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old, by a supernatural work of God : and therefore something extraordinary may be expected from him ; and unto him
- 37 hath he given, by promise, all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell :
- 38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred,
- 39 and take a wife unto my son. And I said unto my master,
- 40 Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, the LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel

- with thee, and prosper thy way ; and thou shalt take a wife
41 for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house : Then
shalt thou be clear from [this] my oath, when thou comest
to my kindred ; and if they give not thee [one,] thou shalt
be clear from my oath, *and whatever might be the consequence*
42 *of the violation thereof.* And I came this day unto the well,
and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou
43 do prosper my way which I go : Behold, I stand by the well
of water ; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin
cometh forth to draw [water,] and I say to her, Give me, I
44 pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink ; And she say
to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels :
[let] the same [be] the woman whom the LORD hath ap-
45 pointed out for my master's son. And before I had done
speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her
pitcher on her shoulder ; and she went down unto the well,
and drew [water :] and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray
46 thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from
her [shoulder,] and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels
drink also : so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.
47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter [art] thou ? And
she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nabor's son, whom Mil-
cah bare unto him : and I put the earring upon her face, and
48 the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed down my head,
and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my
master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take
49 my master's brother's daughter unto his son. And now if ye
will deal kindly and truly with my master, *show true kindness*
and real friendship in giving your daughter to his son, tell me :
and if not, tell me ; that I may turn to the right hand, or to
the left, *and seek a wife for him elsewhere.*
50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing
proceedeth from the LORD : we cannot speak unto thee bad
or good, *any thing which may hinder thy design ; but do fully*
51 *acquiesce in this strange providence.* Behold, Rebekah [is] be-
fore thee, take [her,] and go, and let her be thy master's
son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken, *directed by his provi-*
52 *dence, as we plainly perceive by the whole of this business.* And
it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their
words, he worshipped the LORD, [bowing himself] to the
earth, *and praising him for having thus inclined their hearts.*
53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of
gold, and raiment, and gave [them] to Rebekah : he gave
also to her brother and to her mother precious things, *as a*
proof of his master's wealth and generosity, and in return for
54 *their civility to him.* And they did eat and drink, he and the
men that [were] with him, and tarried all night ; and they
rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my

- 55 master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the dam-
 sel abide with us [a few] days, at the least ten ; after that she
 56 shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the
 Lord hath prospered my way : send me away that I may go
 57 to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and
 58 inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said
 unto her, Wilt thou go with this man ? And, *having an high*
opinion of the piety of Abraham's family, from what she had seen
 59 *in his servant*, she said, I will go. And they sent away Re-
 bekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and
 60 his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her,
 Thou [art] our sister, be thou [the mother] of thousands of
 millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate
 them. *Probably Eliezer had told them there was such a promise*
made to Abraham and his seed, and here they turn it into a
 61 *prayer and a blessing*. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels,
 and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man : and
 the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.
- 62 And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi ; for he
 63 dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate
 in the field at the even tide, *to converse with God and himself*
by pious thoughts and ejaculations, and fervent prayer : and he
 lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold the camels [were]
 64 coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she
 65 saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she [had] said un-
 to the servant, What man [is] this that walketh in the field to
 meet us ? And the servant [had] said, It [is] my master :
 66 therefore she took a veil, and covered herself. And the ser-
 67 vant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac
 brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah,
 and *by the solemnity of marriage* she became his wife ; and he
 loved her : and Isaac was comforted after his mother's
 [death] *which was about three years before, and for which he*
still grieved. This was very suitable to Isaac's character, who
seems to have been as blameless a person as any we read of.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **WE** see what great blessings good servants are to a
 family ; and servants may here see what they ought to
 be. Abraham was so well convinced of Eliezer's piety and fidel-
 ity, that he trusted him with this most important concern, for he
 was old, and could not go on the business himself. Here is a
 good example to servants. This man was eminent for piety ;
 he abounded in prayer and devotion ; called upon God in every
 step he took, and praised him for every mercy he received. He
 was much acquainted with the methods of Providence ; joined
 with pleasure, undoubtedly, in the religious exercises of Abra-

ham's family, and carried his religion with him wherever he went. He delivered his master's orders with all fidelity and diligence, and with a great deal of prudence and caution : he did his business with dispatch ; he minded it more than his meat or drink ; he would not eat till he had told his errand. He regarded his master's profit and comfort, more than his own pleasure. He knew his master would be anxious to know what success he met with, and that affairs wanted him at home ; he was therefore in haste to return. Let servants learn from this example, first, to serve their master in heaven, by prayer and devotion ; and *to show all good fidelity to their masters* on earth, by being diligent in their business, and not trifling over their work, or staying unnecessarily on their errands. Let them all remember that they have a master in heaven, to whom they are accountable for that part of their behaviour which their earthly masters cannot see. Thus they will adorn the religion they profess, and be a credit and comfort to the families where they live. If we desire to have such servants, we should do as Abraham did ; *command our children and household to keep the way of the Lord, and to do justice and judgment.*

2. Let us be excited, by the example of Isaac, to give ourselves to prayer and meditation. Isaac did not go into the field to amuse himself, but to converse with God and his own heart. Like him, let us often retire from the world, and leave its company and cares behind us. Let us examine our hearts ; set God before us ; and remember in our private walks and chambers, that we are not alone, for *God is with us*. Let our walks in the fields be improved to such purposes ; there we see the beauties of creation, and the goodness of God. After the business of the day, it is delightful to refresh ourselves with pious meditations, and to take a review of God's goodness and dealings with us. Thus we shall be likely to meet with mercies and comforts in our walks, as Isaac did ; and shall be training up for that world, where *they neither marry nor are given in marriage.*

CHAP. XXV. 1-18.

Alterations in families of distinction are much taken notice of, and the common topic of conversation. Here are several particulars relating to Abraham's family worthy of our attention; namely, his second marriage; the distribution of his goods; his death and burial; and some account of the descendants of Ishmael.

- 1 **T**HEN again, after Sarah's death, and Isaac's marriage, Abraham, wanting a companion in his old age, took a wife, called a concubine, and her name [was] Keturah. She was born in his house, and perhaps the chief of his maid servants.
- 2 And she bare him six sons, namely, Zimran, and Jokshan;
- 3 and Medan, and Midian,* and Ishbak, and Shuah.† And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan
- 4 were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian were five; Ephah, and Ephher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these [were] the children of Keturah.‡
- 5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac, *as being his*
- 6 *only heir, and the child of promise.* But unto the sons of Hagar and Keturah,|| the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, money and goods, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country, *that they might not interfere with him or claim the land.*
- 7 And these [are] the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years; his
- 8 *latter days were spent in silence and peace.* Then Abraham gave up the ghost, yielded his spirit calmly and cheerfully to God, and died in a good old age, *that is, in an holy old age, free from the calamities and infirmities which often attend that period,* an old man and full [of years; †] and was gathered to
- 9 his people, to his pious ancestors in the other world. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zoar the Hittite, which [is]
- 10 before Mamre; ‡ The field which Abraham purchased of the

* The father of the Midianites, of whom we read chap. xxxvi. 35. Isa. x. 26.

† These children settled in Arabia and Syria, and became the heads of families or tribes. Job probably descended from some of them, as Bildad seems to have done from Shuah.

‡ We read afterward of the five kings of Midian; so that probably a small kingdom rose from each of these.

§ Though Sarah was dead when he married Keturah, yet it seems she was but a half wife, because her children did not inherit.

* That is, Arabia, which lay east of Canaan. Hence they are sometimes called *children of the east*. All the rest was given to Isaac, agreeable to the marriage settlement with Rebekah.

† Full of days. Samar. Pent.

‡ Ishmael seems to have had a great respect for his father, and perhaps often saw him; and now at least, if not before, Isaac and he were reconciled.

sons of Heth : there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

- 11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac, *appling and confirming to him the promises made to Abraham* ; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi ; *near the place where the Lord appeared to Hagar when she fled from Sarah.*
- 12 Now these [are] the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham : And these [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations : the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth ;* and Kedar,† and Adbeel,
- 14 and Mibsam, And Mishma, and Dumah, *from whom came the Idumeans,* and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, *from whom Elphaz, Job's friend, came,* Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah : These [are] the sons of Ishmael, and these [are] their names, by their towns, and by their castles ; twelve princes according to
- 17 their nations.‡ And these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years ; and he gave up the ghost and died ; and was gathered unto his people.
- 18 And they, *Ishmael's sons,* dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that [is] before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria, *almost across the north part of Arabia* : [and] he died in the presence of all his brethren ; *the original is, he fell, that is, his lot fell, in the midst of his brethren, as the angel foretold to Hagar.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HE death of Abraham may convince us of a future state. He was an eminently pious and good man ; a friend of God, and his peculiar favourite ; and, according to our Lord's reasoning, the covenant made with him extended to spiritual and eternal blessings. When God promised that he would be a God to Abraham, it intimated, that he was to live for ever in a future state ; and that both soul and body were to be happy there. We can never think that so good a man as Abraham was lost in the cave ; no ; his desire to be buried there, spoke his hope and expectation, not only that his seed should possess the earthly Canaan, but that he should possess an heavenly one. So Paul interprets it, *of seeking a better country, that is, an heavenly.* The faith of this patriarch was remarkable ; he looked to things unseen and eternal ; and firmly believed that God had provided for him a better city. His removal from this world, after so many appearances of God to him and for him, after the

* Hence Arabia is often called by the ancients, Nabatea.

† Another part of Arabia ; and hence we read of *dwelling in the tents of Kedar.*

‡ Twelve heads of houses or tribes ; and they continued so till near four hundred years after Christ. Thus the promise made to Hagar, *that her seed should not be numbered for multitude,* was fulfilled.

covenant so firmly established, and so many promises made, lead us to conclude, that he went to dwell with God, in that state where all his pious servants shall be happy with him, and where he was gathered to his own people. Let us firmly believe in a future state, which is so much more clearly revealed in the gospel, and give all diligence to prepare for it. It is called *Abraham's bosom*, because he was so intimate a friend of the most High, and therefore admitted to peculiar nearness to God ; and our Lord tells us, that *many shall come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of their heavenly Father.*

2. We learn that there is very little in worldly grandeur. Isaac lived obscurely in tents, a solitary pastoral life, and yet was the friend of God and the heir of heaven ; while Ishmael had a large and spacious country, numerous descendants, towns and castles, and his sons were all princes. One would be ready to conclude, Surely this is the heir of the promise. But when we judge by appearance, we generally judge falsely ; *not many wise, not many noble and mighty are called.* It is so now : the best men often fare worst as to temporal things. It was so formerly, under a more equal providence ! no wonder it should be so now, when we are called to live by faith and not by sight ; and are to wait for our good things till hereafter. While Ishmael was so great, and made such a figure among the nations, Isaac and his family were little, and lived retired and obscure ; but yet, to him were the best blessings promised ; in his seed was the covenant established ; while Ishmael, with all his wealth and power, was a stranger to the covenant of promise. Thus many, even now, have their riches and honours, while they are enemies of God and children of disobedience. On the contrary, holy souls, who live in retirement, in order that they may converse with God and their own hearts, have most ease and comfort ; and the thoughts of having God for their God, is a noble source of joy, and a spring of unutterable delight. Shall we then foolishly choose or wish for our portion to be among the princes and lords of the earth, and envy their grandeur and power, when we see that those are happiest who want these things ? Shall we seek to be rich and great, when so many better blessings are promised to us ? Let us not act so stupid a part ; *but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and other things,* all other important blessings shall be added to us : that, like Isaac, we may dwell comfortably in the communion of God's church and people, and be preparing for the heavenly Canaan, where Isaac has his residence, and all the holy people of old their eternal dwelling.

CHAP. XXV. 19, to the end.

Contains an account of the birth and character of Isaac's sons ; and of Esau selling his birthright to Jacob.

19 **A**ND these [are] the generations of Isaac, Abraham's
20 son : Abraham begat Isaac : And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

21 And Isaac entreated, *prayed fervently and continually, for near twenty years together*, to the LORD for his wife, because she [was] barren ; and the LORD was entreated of him, and
22 Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children, *in an unusual and painful manner*, struggled together within her ; *a presage of the enmity which would subsist between their posterity* : and she said, If [it be] so, why [am] I thus ? *if God hath answered our prayers, why am I in danger of death : why did I conceive, if I cannot be delivered ?* And she went to inquire of the LORD, *by solemn prayer, and other acts of devotion*. And the LORD said unto her, *Two heads of nations [are] in thy womb ; two children, different in their bodily constitution, in their temper of mind, in their course of action, and the practice of religion ; and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, the Edomites and the Israelites ; and [the one] people shall be stronger than [the other] people, the Edomites shall be stronger than the Israelites for a time, but afterward it shall be otherwise ; and the elder shall serve the younger. This was fulfilled in David's time, when the descendants of Esau were conquered.*

24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold,
25 [there were] twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment, *a strong full grown child* ; and they called his name Esau, *which signifies perfected, being of a more strong and perfect natural constitution, than other children usually are ; and hairy, like a man full grown*. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel, *as if he would draw him back, that he might be born first ; and his name was called Jacob, which signifies a supplanter ; a divine presage of what would afterward come to pass* : and Isaac [was] threescore years old when she bare them.

27 And the boys grew : and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, *spending most of his time abroad in the fields, in hunting and the like exercises* ; and Jacob [was] a plain man, dwelling in tents ; *keeping at home, and minding household*
28 *affairs, and the herds and flocks of his father*. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of [his] venison, *and considered the presents he brought him as tokens of respect* : but Rebekah loved Jacob, *because of his more mild and gentle temper, his*

29 *piety, and the divine prediction concerning him.* And Jacob
 and pottage, had prepared some rich broth or soup : and Esau
 came from the field, and he [was] faint, *being fatigued with*
 30 *his exercise :* And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee,
 with that same red [pottage ;*] for I [am] faint : therefore
 31 was his name called Edom, *that is, red.* And Jacob, taking
 advantage of his brother's nicety and hasty temper, said, Sell
 32 me this day, *speedily without delay,* thy birthright.† And
 Esau said, Behold, I [am] at the point to die, *always in danger*
of my life : and what profit shall this birthright do to me
 33 when I am dead ? I care nothing for it. And Jacob said,
 Swear to me this day : and he, *being a profane man, and not*
regarding an oath, swore unto him : and he sold his birthright
 34 unto Jacob.‡ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of
 lentiles ; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his
 way, *without showing any remorse or sorrow for his profane*
bargain, for his ingratitude to God, or the injury he had done
himself and all his posterity : preferring the present and mo-
mentary gratification of his appetite before his father's blessing,
and all the privileges of the birthright ; thus Esau despised
[his] birthright.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us seek the blessing and counsel of God in all our
 affairs. These good men of old were men of prayer ;
 they lived near to God, and conversed much with him. Let us
 emulate their piety, and, in every time of difficulty, seek the
 Lord ; so Isaac did, for his wife and *with her*, as the word might
 be rendered. God is capable of giving those blessings which
 seem most unlikely. Let us pray in faith ; waiting for the ac-
 complishment of our desire, though it should be long delayed.
 God promised Isaac a numerous offspring, yet he prayed. God's
 promises are designed to encourage, and not to supersede our
 prayers ; *for this will I be sought unto, to do it for them, saith the*
Lord. Isaac prayed for near twenty years, before he was answer-
 ed. Thus men ought always to pray and not to faint, being assured
 that God will at length be the rewarder of all them that diligently
 seek him. Let us thus ask that we may receive, and seek that
 we may find, in every affair of doubt and uncertainty. Let us in-

* Perhaps it was tinged red by saffron, or some other herbs or spices ; and so of an agreeable flavour and smell. *Feed me with that red red, for I am faint.* The word red is repeated in the original ; which showed his extreme faintness, and the impatience of his appetite. *Edis.*

† Several privileges attended this, as for instance, a double portion of the father's goods ; greater authority and dignity in the family ; and probably some spiritual blessings, particularly the conducting of religious services, and instructing the younger branches of it.

‡ In the whole of this, Jacob was highly to blame, and did not act that plain and honourable part he ought to have done ; he took an unfair advantage, and hurried on an unfair bargain.

quire of the Lord, as Rebekah did : and though we have no Shekinah, or visible appearance of God among us, and though dreams and visions are not to be expected, yet by his secret influences God can show us the path of life, and lead us in the right way to a city of habitation. *If in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths.* He hath astonishing and unexpected methods in the course of his providence to show us our duty. Let us, therefore wait on him continually. This will be a present ease and satisfaction to the mind, amidst ten thousand uneasy struggles, and is the likeliest way to have success. The success that Isaac found in his prayer, and the answer Rebekah received to her inquiry, should teach us *to be careful for nothing*, that is, not to be immoderately anxious about any event, *but by prayer and thanksgiving make known our requests unto God.*

2. Let us learn, from the example of Esau, not to indulge sensual appetites and passions, and despise our spiritual birthright. This is Paul's reflection in *Heb. xii. 16. lest there be any fornicator, or profane person among you, who, like Esau, for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.* We are God's rational creatures, formed for himself, and born for eternal glory : that spiritual birthright is ours, if we do not miss of it through our own folly. Let us be thankful that we are made capable of being happy, have rational faculties, and immortal natures. Let us praise God that we are distinguished from the heathen nations, in having an assurance of a future eternal world ; and that so many spiritual blessings are promised us in our way to it. May we guard against every thing that would alienate our minds from it, and make us despise the favour of God's covenant ; or think lightly of his blessings, and esteem them not worth having. He will justly be displeased if we do so ; and will not suffer them to be despised with impunity. Let us especially guard against fleshly lusts ; all degrees of sensuality, and particularly such a love of meat and drink, as would unfit us for communion with God, and the pleasures of devotion. This many may indulge, who are not called drunkards or gluttons. What a wretched figure does Esau make ! And how do we pity his folly, who for a meal of meat would sell his birthright, his worldly goods, his authority, and his father's blessing. And are not those greater fools, who sacrifice their souls for such things ? Yet, alas ! how many, like him, are always studying how to indulge their appetites ; eager after every thing that is new, and grateful to their taste ; and are ready to faint and die if their appetite be not indulged ! What an unmanly temper is this ! What a contemptible figure do such persons make in the eyes of all serious and thinking men ! What a wretched thing is it for christians to make a god of their belly, sell their claim to eternal happiness, and sacrifice their precious souls to please their palates ! What a dreadful bargain do they make ! Esau, if he had possessed but a little patience and self-de-

nial, might have had his hunger satisfied, and kept his birthright. So we may moderately use the good things of life, and our spiritual interest not be in danger by it : but if men will make provision for the flesh, run on to excess, and destroy their reason, then, when their passions are strong, they will do any thing : blaspheme God, injure their neighbours, and sport away their souls : and their case will be the same as Esau's ; they, if they do not repent immediately, may find no place for repentance hereafter ; nor will God accept them : but, according to his threatenings, exclude all such shameless persons from the kingdom of heaven, as he did Esau from the earthly Canaan. Let us therefore be upon our guard, knowing that we are in a corrupt body, and easily led astray ; surrounded with bad examples, and exposed to the solicitations of the evil one, who takes advantage of all our hasty passions, to hurry us on to sin and ruin. Let us deny ourselves, keep under our bodies, and be spiritually minded ; never resign spiritual blessings and eternal glory, for any of the accommodations and delights of this world. Better, a thousand times better, to die by hunger or thirst, than to go down to destruction, where there is not a crumb of comfort, or a drop of ease. If we habituate ourselves to a steady course of sobriety and heavenly mindedness, God will delight to bless us ; he will fulfil the promise of his covenant to us here, and at length give us a place in the church of the first born that are written in heaven.

CHAP. XXVI.

We have here Isaac's departure to Gerar, on account of the famine ; his denying his wife, and the reproof for it ; the envy and contention of the Philistines at his prosperity : the covenant between him and Abimelech ; and the marriage of his eldest son, Esau.

- 1 **A**ND there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. *Though a good land, yet it was turned into barrenness by the wickedness of those who dwell therein.* And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, *(not the same Abimelech that was mentioned before, but his son, or successor,)* unto Gerar, where Isaac was born.
- 2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt, *where Abraham went ;* but dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of : *Thus God was pleased to direct his steps, and also to renew the promise made to Abraham, saying,*
- 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee ; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto
- 4 Abraham thy father ; And I will make thy seed to multiply

- as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth
 5 be blessed ; *for this reason*, Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*
- 6 7 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar : And the men of the place asked [him] of his wife ; and he said, She [is] my sister : for he feared to say, [She is] my wife ; lest, [said he,] the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah ; because she [was] fair to look upon. *Thus he fell into the same snare and sin that*
 8 *Abraham did.* And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac [was] sporting with Rebekah his wife ; *using some familiarity which he thought a man of Isaac's gravity and goodness would not take with his*
 9 *sister.* And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she [is] thy wife : and how saidst thou, She [is] my sister ? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die
 10 for her. And Abimelech said, What [is] this thou hast done unto us ? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought guiltiness upon us.†
 11 And Abimelech charged all [his] people, saying, He that toucheth, *or hurteth*, this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.
- 12 Then Isaac sowed in *some part of* that land, *which he had probably hired*, and received in the same year an hundred
 13 fold : and the LORD blessed him : And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great :
 14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants, *for managing his husbandry* : and the
 15 Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines, *contrary to their covenant and oath*, (*ch. xxi. 30, 31.*) had stopped them, and filled them with earth, *because*
 16 *they envied Isaac.* And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us ; for thou art much mightier than we ; *this may breed contentions, and be attended with dangerous consequences.*
 17 And Isaac, *without resistance, and for peace sake*, gave up his lands and departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
- 18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father ;‡ for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham : and he

* It must give high delight to Isaac to hear his father thus honourably mentioned, and it was a powerful motive to him to go and do likewise.

† Such an enormous crime did the Philistines think adultery to be, that Abimelech expected God would have punished all his country for it.

‡ This he had a right to do by agreement, and there he was sure to find water.

- called their names after the names by which his father had
 19 called them, *out of respect to his father's memory*. And
 Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well
 20 of springing water. And the herdmen of Gerar did strive
 with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water [is] ours : and he
 called the name of the well Esek, *that is, contention* ; because
 21 they strove with him. And they digged another well, and
 strove for that also : and he called the name of it Sitnah, *that*
 22 *is, hatred*. And he removed from thence, and digged another
 well ; and for that they strove not : and he called the name of
 it Rehoboth, *that is, room* ; and he said, For now the LORD
 hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.
 23 And after some time, the famine being ended, and being afraid
 24 of the Philistines, he went up from thence to Beersheba. And
 the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I [am]
 the God of Abraham thy father : fear not *these Philistines,*
or any mischief by them, for I [am] with thee, and will bless
 thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake,
 25 and for the sake of the covenant made with him. And he build-
 ed an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and
 pitched his tent there : and there Isaac's servants digged a
 well.
 26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath
 one of his friends, and Phichol* the chief captain of his army.
 27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing
 28 ye hate me, and have sent me away from you ? And they
 said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee ; and
 we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, [even] betwixt
 29 us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee ; That thou
 wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we
 have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee
 away in peace ; thou [art] now the blessed of the LORD ; and
 since God hath blessed thee so abundantly, thou oughtest not to
 30 remember the small unkindness showed thee. And he made
 31 them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up
 betimes in the morning, and sware one to another : and Isaac
 32 sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. And
 it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and
 told him concerning the well which they had digged, and
 33 said unto him, We have found water. And he called it She-
 bah, *that is, an oath* : therefore the name of the city [is]
 Beersheba, *that is, the well of the oath*, unto this day.
 34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith
 the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daugh-
 35 ter of Elon the Hittite, *both of them Canaanites* : Which were
 a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah ; *being contrary to*
the command of his father, mother, and grandfather.

* This was probably a general name for the chief officer of the army.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW comfortable is it to converse with God, as the God of our fathers ! It was so to Isaac. He undoubtedly was glad that he was the heir of so good a man, and to have the promise, made to Abraham, renewed to him and his seed. As we desire the God of our fathers to bless us, let us see to it that we walk in their steps. *Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind.* As our God, let us praise him ; as our fathers' God, let us exalt him.

2. We are in danger of imitating the failings of good men who are near and dear to us. Affection for them, and regard to their memory, lessen their faults in our esteem. There was a meanness even in Isaac's conduct. The appearance of God twice for his father, should have taught him to act better ; but he fell into the same error. We have all need to be watchful in following the example even of good men, lest we adopt their miscarriages : we should follow them no further than they followed Christ ; only in that which is good.

3. Adultery is a great crime, and brings guilt upon a nation ; it is baseness and injustice both to God and man ; it was condemned by heathen nations ; by the law of the Jews such were to be put to death ; so they were by the Saxon law ; and it is strange it should not be so now. Profane persons may think and speak lightly of it, but such God will judge ; and *they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

4. Let us seek the blessing of the Lord, that maketh rich. Isaac occupied other people's land, and the Lord blessed him. On that we should all depend. Let those whose labour is in the field, and who cultivate the land, look up to God for a blessing on the seed they sow, and pray the God of nature to prosper their labour. Let ministers also look to God to prosper the seed of the word, that it may not return void, but bring forth abundant fruit to the glory of God, and the eternal advantage of men's souls. *Neither is he that soweth or planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.*

5. It is God that maketh room for us in every agreeable settlement, v. 22. After difficulties and straits God will bring us into a large place, and make our way prosperous. Let us see his hand and adore his goodness, who fixes our stations, and makes our endeavours successful ; and give him all the praise. We shall be likely to find it so, if we study a peaceful, contented spirit, and give up our interest for the sake of peace. To promote this, let us carry a sense of his presence wherever we go ; build an altar, and call upon his name, in those settlements which Providence allots us. If we set the Lord always before us, we shall not be moved.

6. The imprudent and sinful behaviour of children, is a great grief to pious parents ; especially when they join themselves to irreligious families, and are unequally yoked with unbelievers. Esau's conduct imbittered Isaac's comfort, notwithstanding all his prosperity. *A foolish son is a heaviness to his father.* Let those wicked children, who are a grief of mind to their pious parents, and are bringing down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, know and consider, that God remembers their grief, will reckon with those who were the authors of it, and inflict a heavy punishment upon them, unless they repent of so ungrateful and abominable a conduct. Let parents inure their children to acts of self-denial and mortification ; and carefully restrain them from the appearance of evil, as the most likely way to keep them from such practices as would be a grief to their parents ; and incline them to those which would make them growing comforts to their parents and friends, and ornaments to religion. *My son,* says Solomon, *if thou be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.*

CHAP. XXVII.

We have before been informed of the struggles between Esau and Jacob, here we have a further account of them. Isaac intended to bless Esau ; Rebekah contrives to prevent it ; the blessing is conferred on Jacob ; Esau laments it in vain ; and discovers great enmity to his brother.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass, that when Isaac was an hundred and thirty seven years old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son : and he said unto him, Behold [here am]
- 2 I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death ; *how soon I may die, I expect it every day :*
- 3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me [some] venison :
- 4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring [it] to me, that I may eat, *and be refreshed and strengthened ;* that my soul may bless thee before I die ; *bestow my solemn, extraordinary, and prophetic blessing, whereby I declare and constitute thee my heir apparent of all the blessings bestowed by God upon me and my fathers.* Isaac, out of his fond affection to Esau, endeavours to entail the blessing upon him ; but God, by
- 5 Rebekah's means, disappoints his purpose. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt [for] venison, [and] to bring [it.]
- 6 And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,
- 7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I

may eat, and bless thee before the Lord, *in his presence, and*
by his authority, before my death. Now therefore, my son,
 9 obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go
 now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of
 the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy fa-
 10 ther, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring [it] to thy
 father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his
 11 death, *according as God hath promised.* And Jacob said to
 Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother [is] a hairy
 12 man, and I [am] a smooth man: My father peradventure
 will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I
 13 shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his
 mother said unto him, Upon me [be] thy curse, my son:
 14 only obey my voice, and go fetch me [them.*] And he
 went, and fetched, and brought [them] to his mother: and
 his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.
 15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau,
 which [were] with her in the house, and put them upon Ja-
 cob her younger son: *some say, the sacerdotal garments;*
probably they were some rich perfumed garments that were made
 16 *for Esau, as the eldest son.* And she put the skins of the kids
 of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:
 17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she
 had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.
 18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and
 19 he said, Here [am] I; who [art] thou, my son? And Ja-
 cob said unto his father, I [am] Esau thy firstborn; I have
 done according as thou badest me; (*this was a downright lie,*
and cannot be vindicated:) arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of
 20 my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto
 his son, How [is it] that thou hast found [it] so quickly, my
 son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought [it]
 to me. *Strange that he should introduce the name of God;*
 21 *but one lie generally draws on another.* And Isaac said unto
 Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son,
 22 whether thou [be] my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went
 near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The
 voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands [are] the hands of Esau.
 23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as
 24 his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. And he said,
 [Art] thou my very son Esau? And he said, I [am].
 25 And he said, Bring [it] near to me, and I will eat of
 my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he
 brought [it] near to him, and he did eat: and he brought
 26 him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto

* Her design was undoubtedly good, being under the direction of a divine oracle, (ch. xxv. 23.) but she took a wrong method to accomplish it: it was imposing upon Isaac, it was teaching Jacob to lie, and might have brought a curse upon him, had the cheat been discovered. She ought to have informed Isaac of her apprehension of the design of the oracle, and prayed God to direct him right in the matter.

- him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son : *this was a mark of that special favour and affection wherewith he bestowed the blessing.* And he came near, and kissed him : and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son [is] as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed : Therefore God give thee, *or, he will give thee, (it is both a prayer and a promise)* of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine : *these temporal blessings were more frequently promised and bestowed under the Old Testament, and were types of spiritual blessings :* Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee ; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee, *hereby confirming to him the right of the firstborn :* cursed [be] everyone that curseth thee, and blessed [be] he that blesseth thee.
- And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had dressed his venison and made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who [art] thou ? and he said, I [am] thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who ? where [is] he that hath taken venison, and brought [it] me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him ? yea, [and] *however I might wish the contrary, I find my mind so much under a divine impulse, that I must confirm what I have done, and he shall be blessed ; God will ratify and establish it.*
- And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, [even] me also, O my father : *but he found no place for repentance in Isaac, though he sought it earnestly with tears.* And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing ; *that which by birthright belongs to thee, and which I had fully resolved to bestow upon thee.* And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob ? *that is, a supplanter ;* for he hath supplanted me these two times : he took away my birthright, *(a false accusation, for he himself despised it, and sold it,)* and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me ? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants ; and with corn and wine have I sustained him : and what shall I do now unto thee, my son ? *I have no other blessing comparatively, to bestow upon thee.* And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing my father ? bless me, [even] me also, O my father. And Esau

lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above ; *in a country competently fruitful, and refreshed with convenient dews and showers.** And by thy sword shalt thou live, *by violence, rapine, and war,* and shalt serve thy brother ; † and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, *not over the Israelites, for we never read of this ; but, when thou shalt gain strength it shall come to pass* that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck. ‡

41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him : And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, *according to the course of nature ; (yet he lived forty four years after)* then will I slay my brother Jacob.

42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah : and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself *with thoughts of revenge,* [purposing] to kill thee, *and by that cruel means he hopes to recover his birthright again.*

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice ; and arise, flee thou 44 to Laban my brother to Haran ; And tarry with him a few days, *(which proved to be above twenty years, ch. xxxi. 38.)*

45 until thy brother's fury turn away ; Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget [that] which thou hast done to him : then I will send and fetch thee from thence : why should I be deprived also of you both in one day ? *one by murder, the other by the hand of justice, or by some remarkable*

46 *stroke of divine vengeance.* And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth : if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these [which are] of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me ? *Therefore let us send him to fetch a wife from his own kindred, as Abraham did. This was a plausible excuse for sending him away : and Isaac fell in with the proposal, as is related in the next chapter.*

* Mount Seir was such a place, Joshua xxiv. 4.

† This was fulfilled in the time of David. See 2 Sam. viii. 14.

‡ This was done in the days of Jeroboam, as we read, 2 Kings viii. 16, 26, 28. when the Edomites rebelled and threw off the yoke.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HERE is but little reason to wish for a very advanced age. Isaac's life was a burden to him, though, no doubt, he enjoyed the pleasures of meditation and devotion. He lived above forty years after he was almost blind. It often happens in advanced age for *those that look out of the windows to be darkened*. Let young persons, therefore, be admonished to *remember their Creator in the days of their youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when they shall say, we have no pleasure in them*. Improve the benefit of sight in reading God's word, treasure it up in your mind, and thereby get wisdom and understanding. Let aged christians *set their house in order*, like Isaac v. 2. make their wills, and settle their affairs. This thought, *we know not the day of our death*, should quicken us all, that whatever our hands find to do, we may do it with all our might; for time is uncertain, and the Son of man may come at an hour when we think not. Let us thank God for a better world, where we shall no more labour under the infirmities of age, and where *the eyes that see shall no more be dim*. Isa. xxxii. 3.

2. See the wisdom of God in carrying on his own gracious purposes. He can overrule the misguided passions of men to perfect his own schemes, as in the case of Isaac, who, contrary to his partial affection for Esau, was led to confer, and afterward to confirm the blessing on Jacob. The means by which it was obtained on the part of Jacob cannot be vindicated. This however is no objection against the credibility of the fact itself, which was undoubtedly under the divine direction, for it is said, *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come* Heb. xi. 20.

3. How unaccountably does God dispose of his favours! This is Paul's reflection from this story; Rom. xi. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*. Esau was willing, and ran; but God knew him to be a profane man, and gave the blessing to Jacob. In all this he doeth according to his own will, and acts with unerring wisdom even when his dispensations are darkest: this is a good reason why we should submit to his determinations; *there are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand*.

4. Let us be careful not to despise the blessing, lest it be too late to obtain it. This is another reflection of Paul's in Heb. xii. 16, 17, *for (speaking of profane Esau, he says) ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*. Those who sacrifice their interest in God, their religion and conscience, for worldly things, judge themselves unworthy of spiritual blessings, and shall never possess them. Esau wept when it was too late, and so will sinners hereafter; they will cry with an exceeding bitter cry, but there is no blessing for them;

they will know how to value it when it is too late. *Today, therefore, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts ; but seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.*

5. Let us guard against those malignant passions that are so ready to rise in our breasts. What a horrid figure does Esau make ! what a strange composition of hatred to his brother, and affection to his aged father ! It was not on a sudden passion only, but rank malice in his heart ; he hoped for his father's death, like a wicked son ; and this only kept him from imbruing his hand immediately in his brother's blood. Let us keep a guard upon our souls, and rule our own spirits ; and learn to be content and easy under the disappointments of life. If others prosper more than we, it is God's appointment ; and it is highly wicked to quarrel with him. We learn from the whole, that those who despise and undervalue spiritual blessings, lay a foundation for bitter disappointment, remorse, and vexation. *Look diligently, therefore, lest any fail of the grace of God.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

Gives an account of Jacob's journey, vision, and vow.

- 1 **A**ND Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, *purposedly, and designedly ; in faith he now confirmed that blessing to him, which before he had given him unknowingly ; and hereby God confirms Jacob's faith against doubts and fears, and comforts him against future troubles that might befall him ; and*
- 2 *Isaac charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a*
- 3 *wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father ; and take thee a*
- 4 *wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's*
- 5 *brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of*
- 6 *people ; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee ; that is, the land of Canaan, a numerous*
- 7 *offspring, and that the Messiah may spring from thee ; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art at present a stranger, not being yet possessed of it ; but which God gave unto Abraham. Thus God confirms the settlement to him exclusive*
- 8 *of Esau. And Isaac sent away Jacob alone, that Esau might not suspect him : and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.*
- 9 *When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence ; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan ; And that*

Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram; And Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; Then went Esau unto the family of Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife. *This he did in hope of ingratiating himself with his father; but it was quite too late, and but a partial amendment; for his hatred to Jacob and his profaneness still continued.*

10 And Jacob took with him his staff, and such small provisions as he could carry; to have taken more would have increased his brother's hatred and envy; and he went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place,* and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put [them for] his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. *He had a cold lodging and a hard pillow, but a comfortable night, for God appeared to him there in a vision.*

11 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; to represent to Jacob the providence of God, who, though he dwells in heaven, extends his government and care to the earth, and all who dwell thereon: and, behold, the angels of

12 God ascending and descending on it.† And, behold, the glory of the Lord stood above it, appeared at the top of the ladder, and a voice said, I [am] the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to

13 thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth

14 be blessed. And, behold, I [am] with thee, and will keep thee in all [places] whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done [that] which I have spoken to thee of. *Thus God confirmed his promises to Jacob; assuring him of defence, provision, protection, and at length a happy settlement in that land, together with all spiritual blessings.*

15 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, by these tokens of his special and gracious presence, and the revelation of his mind and will to me; and I

16 knew [it] not, I little expected such revelations here. And he was afraid, struck with a reverential fear of the majesty of God, in respect of his own vileness and unworthiness, and he said,

* A shady spot, where were almond trees, between thirty and forty miles from the place where he set out, and about eight miles from Jerusalem.

† To show that God makes use of them as ministering spirits, to execute his orders and do his pleasure: that they are all active, all under the direction of infinite wisdom, who will give them a particular charge concerning his servants. How suitable and encouraging a representation was this to Jacob, when dying for his life, and desolate of all things!

- How dreadful, or awful, [is] this place ! this [is] none other but the house of God, *the habitation where he dwells, with all his glorious attendants*, and this [is] the gate of heaven that
 18 leads to his high and holy courts. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put [for] his pillows ; and set it up [for] a pillar, *as a monument for the remembrance of God's appearing to him*, and poured oil upon
 19 the top of it, *as a thank offering to God*. And he called the name of that place Bethel, *that is, the house of God* : But the name of that city, *near to which this pillar was set up*, [was called] Luz at the first, *that is, almond, or, the city of almond trees*.
 20 And Jacob vowed a vow, *entered into a solemn religious promise or obligation*, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat,
 21 and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace, *that is, when God shall have done according to his promise, (v. 15.) which I firmly believe he will perform* ; then shall the Lord be my God, *owned by me as the author of my welfare and salvation, and worshipped in my family as such* :
 22 And this stone, which I have set [for] a pillar, shall be God's house ; *a place for his worship, where I will build an altar and offer sacrifices* ; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee, *for the maintenance of thy worship, and other pious uses*.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T is a great mercy to have religious parents, to recommend us to the blessing of God ; to pray for us and with us ; these prayers should be highly valued by us, for God values them. The children of his servants should rejoice in their privileges, and improve them ; and above all, be thankful for Jesus Christ, *who ever liveth to make intercession for us*.
2. Let us adore the providence of God, as exercised by his angels ; and beg of him to give them charge concerning us ; that we may have their guardian care and protection in all our motions. This must have been a great comfort to Jacob, and confirm his faith and hope, and confidence in God and his providence. The great God hath legions of angels at his command ; and *they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation*. How cheerfully may good men go on in the way of duty, when they have such protectors ! the ladder is still fixed ; and by faith we may see the angels ascending and descending to receive orders from God, and execute his will. Though God's throne of glory is in heaven, and he keeps his brightest court there, his providence extends to this world, *and not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice*. He feeds the

ravens when they cry, and the lions when they roar ; he clothe the grass and the lilies ; and will he not much more take care of his servants ? Let them exercise faith in his protecting providence, when, like Jacob, they are exposed to difficulties and dangers ; when going on journeys ; when entering on new settlements, or relations in life ; when leaving old friends, and going to strange places or families, or business ; for he hath said, *I will give my angels charge concerning thee ; and I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Let us rejoice in this, and bless God, who causeth his angels to encamp around us, to be our defence in this world ; and at length will conduct us in our last remove, and carry us to Abraham's bosom, to join their innumerable company there, together with the spirits of all just men made perfect. Once more,

3. When God hath shown us mercy, let us renew our vows to serve him ; so Jacob did. By religious vows we give glory to God, and own our dependence upon him ; and we lay a bond upon our own souls in all our religious engagements, to excite and quicken our obedience to him. Let us imitate Jacob's faith and gratitude. God had promised to be with him, and provide for him ; Jacob lays hold on this promise, and says, Seeing God will do thus with me, I will love and serve and honour him. Let us imitate his modesty and moderation : though heir to great things, he only asks food and raiment. Nature is content with little, grace with less. Agur's wish was, *Feed me with food convenient for me.* Let us imitate his piety in what he desired, that God would be with him and keep him ; and also in what he designed, that he would acknowledge the Lord as his God, build an altar for his worship, and give him the tenth of all that he had. Thus should all the mercies we receive be improved as additional obligations to walk closely with God, as our God ; and when we receive extraordinary mercies from him, let us study to show some signal instance of gratitude and obedience to him ; so shall the God of Jacob be our God for ever and ever, and our guide even unto death.

CHAP. XXIX.

Contains an account of Jacob's arrival at the place appointed ; his marriage there ; and how the promise began to be fulfilled, that God would make of him a great nation.

1 **T**HEN Jacob went on his journey, or, *lifted up his feet with great cheerfulness and vigour, (as well he might after such a vision)* and came into the land of the people
2 of the east, to Mesopotamia, where Laban dwelt. And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there [were]

three flocks of sheep lying by it ; for out of that well they watered the flocks : and a great stone [was] upon the well's mouth, *to preserve it sweet and secure.* And thither were all the flocks gathered : and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place. And Jacob, *believing that they were of the same employment as himself, respectfully* said unto them, My brethren, whence [be] ye ? And they said, Of Haran [are] we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nabor ? And they said, We know [him.] And he said unto them, [Is] he well ? And they said, [He is] well : and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he *began to talk with them about their occupation, and the best way of managing their flocks,* and said, Lo, [it is] yet high day, neither [is it] time that the cattle should be gathered together : water ye the sheep, and go [and] feed [them.] And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and [till] they roll the stone from the well's mouth, *for we have made an agreement to wait for one another, and when all are gathered together, then we will water the sheep.*

And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep : for she kept them. *This was formerly reckoned a noble employment, as their chief wealth lay in cattle. Rachel probably had shepherds under her, but she presided, and looked well to her flock.* And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and, *as an introduction to further acquaintance, he* rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother, *that is, he assisted in doing it.* And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept ; *he shed tears of joy, to think of the kind providence that had attended him in his journey, and that he had happily met with such an agreeable relation at the end of it.* And Jacob told Rachel that [he] was her father's brother, or kinsman, *that is, sister's son, and that he [was] Rebekah's son :* and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house, and *thus gave him the most kind reception, though he might be surpris'd to see him come alone, and not attended as his father's servant was ; but Jacob opened his heart to his kinsman,* and he told Laban all these things, *about his journey, and the cause of it, what he had seen in the way, and the reason he had to hope for the divine protection and blessing.* And Laban said to him, Surely thou [art] my bone and my flesh, *my near kinsman and nephew.* And he abode with him the space of a month ; *after which he agreed to take care of Laban's sheep and cattle.*

- 15 And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou [art] my brother, or kinsman, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? *this would be unreasonable, let us therefore come to some agreement* ; tell me, what [shall] thy wages [be?] And Laban had two daughters : the name of the elder [was] Leah, and the name of the younger [was] Rachel. Leah [was] tender eyed ; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel ; and *it was the custom in those days to purchase wives, but Jacob, having nothing to give, said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.*
- 19 And Laban said, [It is] better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man : abide with me ; *an ambiguous and crafty answer, intended to make Jacob think that he consented, but serving only to hide his real design.* And Jacob served seven years for Rachel ; and *his affection for his cousin was so great, that they seemed unto him [but] a few days, for the love he had to her.*
- 21 And Jacob said unto Laban, Give [me] my wife, for my days are fulfilled, *the seven years' service agreed upon,* that I may go in unto her, *and make her my wife by marriage, as she hath already been by contract.* And Laban seemingly consented to this ; *and as these marriages were done publicly before proper witnesses, so he gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.* And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him ; and he went in unto her ; *and, she being veiled and in the dark, he could not discern the fraud.* And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid [for] an handmaid, or bondwoman.
- 25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it [was] Leah ! *What a grievous disappointment was this ! What a shameful return of Laban for Jacob's faithful services ! What a foolish thing in Leah ! for what happiness could she expect in such a connection : and what injustice to Rachel, as well as Jacob ! He was justly provoked, and he said to Laban, What [is] this thou hast done unto me ? did not I serve with thee for Rachel ? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me ?* And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. *This was a sorry answer, probably there was no such custom ; if there was, he ought to have been told of it before.* He adds, Fulfil her week, keep the week of feasting for thy marriage with Leah, and so confirm the marriage with her, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. *This was quite a new contract, and a very unjust demand ; but Jacob was obliged to comply with it, as he could not think of leaving Rachel, or putting away Leah.*
- 28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week : and at the end of that week he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also, *as*

- condition that he served him seven years longer. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid. And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.
- 21 And when the Lord saw that Leah [was] comparatively hated, and Rachel preferred before her, (by which she was punished for consenting with her father to the sin) that he opened her womb : but Rachel [was] barren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben, *that is, See a son, or, Behold how God hath given me now a son in my affliction* : for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction ; now therefore my husband will love me. And she conceived again, and bare a son ; and said, Because the Lord hath heard that I [was] hated, he hath therefore given me this [son] also : and she called his name Simeon, *that is, hearing, because God heard her prayer*. And she conceived again, and bare a son ; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me in more sincere and fervent affection, because I have borne him three sons : therefore was his name called Levi, *that is, joined*. And she conceived again, and bare a son : and she said, Now will I praise the Lord openly, in a solemn manner : therefore she called his name Judah, *that is, praise* ; and after this she left off bearing for a while ; for she had other children afterward, as we shall see in the next chapter.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**HEN we have enjoyed communion with God, and have been favoured with his blessings, we may go on cheerfully. The design of his favours is to make us active in his service, that we may lift up our feet in the way to heaven. When he hath enlarged our heart, we should run in the way of his commandments ; when he hath put spiritual strength into us, that strength should be employed in making advances heavenward. When we, like Jacob, have devoted ourselves to God, and have reason to hope he hath accepted us, we may still, as the pious eunuch when he was baptised, *Acts viii. 39. go on our way rejoicing* ; though difficulties and dangers are before us, we may lift up our feet, having God with us ; being surrounded with angels ; having his Spirit for our guide, and his promises for our cordial. We are to run with patience the race that is set before us ; and thus, by being strong in faith, we are to give glory to God.
2. We have in Jacob a good example of civility and a readiness to do good offices, and the happy consequences of it. Courteous civility even to strangers is commendable ; it gains a man esteem and makes way for him. Had not Jacob spoken civilly to

those shepherds, he might not have known his relations, or not have been so welcome to them. Jacob was a plain man, and yet he knew how to treat others in an obliging manner. On his tongue was the law of kindness; this made his abode in that country more agreeable, and kept up a good understanding between him and his brother shepherds. Probably he met with respect and kindness from them. So we should learn to be courteous, to serve one another in love, and to treat even strangers with civility and respect; knowing that it is agreeable to them, may be very useful to us, and is indeed *fulfilling the law of Christ*.

3. God sometimes shows his people their former sins in those afflictions that he causes to befall them. Jacob had craftily obtained his father's blessing, had beguiled and supplanted his brother; and here he is beguiled and supplanted by Laban in a very tender instance. This probably brought his own sin to remembrance, and would make his disappointment more grievous. Such methods God is pleased sometimes to take, in order to lead men to repentance; *with what measure they mete, it is measured to them again*. There is much wisdom in this, as it humbles them, renews their repentance for sin, which they had perhaps forgotten, and makes them more cautious and watchful for the time to come. Jacob could not but own, as Adonibezek afterward did, when he lost his thumbs and toes, that *the Lord was righteous in so requiting him*. It is well if, amidst the afflictions of life, we can appeal to God concerning our integrity, and have not former sins brought to our remembrance, to increase the trouble and double the grief. Innocence is a good support under disappointment.

4. Let us cherish the love of God, as that which will make his service most easy and delightful to us, *v. 20*. This is the great commanding passion that regulates and governs the rest; if this be rightly fixed, and rises high, apparently difficult things will be easy. Jacob regarded not the heat by day, nor the frost by night, nor so long servitude, to have an agreeable relative; and shall we think a few years too much to employ in the service of God, when attended with so much present pleasure, and the agreeable prospect of being completely happy for ever? We may rest assured, that when the service is over, and we rest from our labours, we shall not be, like Jacob, disappointed, and forced to begin again, but shall be put in the full possession of that which is the great object of our desire and pursuit. We do not, we shall not, serve God for nought. Let us cultivate love to him, and delight in him; that will make even difficulties pleasant, and teach us to glory in tribulation. If we had sincere love to God, we should never say, *What a weariness is it to serve him? when will the sabbath be gone, and his service be over?* It is in vain for men to pretend to love God, when their hearts are not with him, and when they do not take pleasure in his service. If

we love him, we shall call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable, and it will be honoured by us ; nor shall we scruple to break through difficulties to serve and obey him. As he is the most worthy object of our love and desire, if our affections are suitably raised, we shall be glad of any method to show our love and respect. In like manner should we cherish a kind and benevolent affection to our fellow creatures, as the only foundation for kind and benevolent words and actions. If devotion and charity freeze at the heart, the life will be destitute of the fruits of them. Earnest longings after the enjoyment of God's favour and friendship, and the prospect of likeness to him, in a better world, will make us steady and constant in his service. This will be the best remedy against the evils of life ; none of these things will then move us, neither shall we count our lives dear unto us, so that we may finish our course with joy. If the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts, through the holy Spirit given unto us, we shall esteem the afflictions of the present life light, and not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. The Lord direct our hearts, therefore, into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for of Christ Jesus ; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, those things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

CHAP. XXX.

Gives an account of the increase of Jacob's family and substance.

- 1 **A**ND when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister ; and said unto Jacob, Give
- 2 me children, or else I die with grief and vexation. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel his beloved wife, and he made a very grave and pious reply, and said, [Am] I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb ? It is his prerogative to give children. But so desirous
- 3 was Rachel to have children of her own, And so impatient, that she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her ; and she shall bear upon my knees, or left, that I may also have children by her, that may be brought up and nursed by me as my
- 4 own. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife, or as a concubine : and Jacob overcome by her constant importunity, complied, and went in unto her.
- 5 6 And Bilhah conceived and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, given sentence on my side against Leah, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son : therefore called she his name Dan, that is judging.
- 7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a

8 second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed ; *I and my sister have striven for children, and I have gotten my wish at length beyond my sister's expectation :* and she called his name Naphtali, *that is, my wrestling.*

9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah
10 her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. And Zilpah Leah's
11 maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh,
12 *I shall have more children still :* and she called his name Gad,
13 *that is, a troop, or company.* And Zilpah Leah's maid bare
14 Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the
daughters will call me blessed ; and she called his name
Asher, *that is, happy.*

15 And Reuben, *Leah's eldest son,* went in the days of wheat
harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, *probably tithes of a*
beautiful colour, and brought them unto his mother Leah.
Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's
16 mandrakes. And she said unto her, [Is it] a small matter
that thou hast taken my husband ? *that is, drawn his affection*
from me, so that he estrangeth himself from my bed through thy
means, and wouldst thou take away my son's mandrakes also ?
And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night
17 for thy son's mandrakes. And Jacob came out of the field
in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said,
Thou must come in unto me ; for surely I have hired thee
with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.*

18 And God hearkened unto Leah, *to her earnest prayers,* and
she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said,
God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maid-
en to my husband : and she called his name Issachar, *that is,*
19 *an hire, or wages.* And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob
20 the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me [with]
a good dowry ; now will my husband dwell with me, because
I have borne him six sons : and she called his name Zebulun,
21 *that is, dwelling.* And afterward she bare a daughter, and
called her name Dinah, *that is, judgment, as if she had now got*
the better of Rachel.

22 And God would not suffer Leah to triumph, therefore re-
membered Rachel, and God hearkened to her and opened her
23 womb. And she conceived, and bare a son ; and said, God
24 hath taken away my reproach, *that is, my barrenness :* And
she called his name Joseph, *that is, adding ;* and said, the
LORD shall add to me another son.

25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, and

* The reason of this contention between Jacob's wives for his company, was the earnest desire they had to fulfil the promise made to Abraham, that *his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, and that in one seed of his, that is, the Messiah, all the nations of the earth should be blessed.* It would have been below the dignity of such a sacred history as this to relate such things if there had not been something of great consideration in them ; and that it was on a religious account, seems plain from y. 17.

- the second seven years' service was fulfilled, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own*
- 36 *place, and to my country. Give [me] my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go : for thou*
- 37 *knowest my service which I have done thee. And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine*
- eyes, [tarry : for] I have learned by experience that the*
- 38 *Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint*
- 39 *me thy wages, and I will give [it.] And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle*
- 40 *was with me. For [it was] little which thou hadst before I [came,] and it is [now] increased unto a multitude ; and the*
- Lord hath blessed thee since my coming : and now when*
- 41 *shall I provide for mine own house also ? And he said, What shall I give thee ? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not*
- give me any thing, no certain wages, or stinted hire, but only*
- what God's providence shall allot me ; if thou wilt do this thing*
- 42 *for me, I will again feed [and] keep thy flock : I will pass through all thy flock today, removing from thence all the*
- speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats ;*
- all these shall be removed and sent to a distance ; and from this*
- time all [of such] colours or marks as I have described, that shall*
- 43 *be born of the white dams under my care, shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, my*
- just dealing shall be made evident by the very colour of the cattle, and when it shall come for my hire before thy face : every*
- one that [is] not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be accounted stolen with me,*
- 44 *And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word ; knowing that cattle naturally bring forth young ones*
- 45 *like themselves. And he, that is, Laban, removed that day the he goats that were ring streaked, had rings of different*
- colours round their legs or bodies, and spotted, and all the she*
- goats that were speckled and spotted, [and] every one that had [some] white in it, and all the brown among the sheep,*
- 46 *and gave [them] into the hand of his sons. And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob : and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.*
- 47 *And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hasel and chestnut tree ; and piled white streaks in them, and*
- 48 *made the white appear which [was] in the rods. And he set the rods which he had piled before the flocks in the gutters*
- in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that*
- 49 *they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle*
- 50 *ring streaked, speckled, and spotted.* And Jacob did sepa-*

* Though the strength of imagination in time of conception may be very great, yet there was a special providence in this, as a recompense for his sore labour.

rate all the lambs, which were thus brought forth spotted; and set the faces of the flocks of Laban, which were white or brown, toward the ring streaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban, that by looking on the party coloured at the time when they coupled, they might bring forth the like : and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle, lest by looking on them they should bring forth single coloured.

41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods, and

42 be ring streaked. But when the cattle were feeble, as in the autumn, (for the cattle bred twice a year) he put [them] not in : so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

43 And by these three stratagems, or contrivances, and the blessing of God upon him, the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid servants, and men servants, and camels, and asses.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us guard against envy. What a wretched figure does Rachel here make ! She was grieved and vexed at the prosperity of her sister, till she almost fretted herself to death. *Envy is the rottenness of the bones*, destroys all health and self enjoyment ; and often occasions great differences between near relations. It is also a sin against God, who makes men to differ. Let us check the first beginning of so baleful a passion. To envy the prosperity of others is foolish and wicked, and makes us our own tormentors. Envy not sinners, therefore, but *be in the fear of the Lord all the day long*.

2. Let us regard God as the author of all the pleasing and calamitous events of life. Children are an heritage of the Lord ; his hand is to be owned in all our mercies ; it is he also who withholds any mercy from us, and he has a right to do it, for we have forfeited all. He may do what he will with his own ; on his blessing we constantly depend for the most common enjoyments : *Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil and affliction also ?* When he withholds or takes away children, as well as when he gives them, it becomes us to say, *The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord*.

3. See the fatal and natural consequence of polygamy. Into how many snares and vexations was Jacob led by the scandalous disputes of his wives, the debates of his father in law, and his own imprudent conduct ! and what a wretched life must that man have, who is perpetually vexed with such competitors ! This is designed to show us what an evil thing polygamy is, and the wisdom of that divine institution, which enjoins that one man and one

woman only should be joined together. And to prevent all those jealousies, vexations, and quarrels, things of such ill report, the apostle commands, 1 Cor. vii. 2. *Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.*

4. It is desirable to be such in our respective stations, as that God may bless others for our sakes. Laban owns he was blessed, not for his own sake, but for Jacob's. Good men are a blessing to families where their lot is cast. Such should all servants be, and such servants should be highly esteemed and prized: the wicked may sometimes be blessed, for the sake of their pious relations. In whatever stations of life Providence fixes us, let us behave well in them, and fill them up with honour and integrity; that we may, in this way, be a blessing to all who are related to us, and have the comfort of being serviceable to them as well as others. To obtain the blessing of God on others, is the best service we can do them; and to be instrumental in this will be a foundation for the greatest satisfaction. Jacob, for whose sake Laban was blessed, was remarkably blessed himself; he had been just and industrious in Laban's service, and God made his own affairs prosperous. It is the blessing of God alone that maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it.

CHAP. XXXI.

Jacob having spent several years in Laban's service, begins to be weary, and to think of returning home. We have in this chapter his intention to depart, and the reason of it. He begins his journey; Laban pursues him, and expostulates with him on his flight; Jacob's wise and admirable reply; and their hasty agreement and friendly parting: in all of which we see much of the hand and providence of God.

1 **A**ND he, that is, Jacob, heard the words of Laban's sons, who began to quarrel with and reprosent him as a thief, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that [was] our father's: and of [that] which [was] our father's hath he gotten 2 all this glory, or wealth. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it [was] not toward him as before; he could not conceal his hatred. This made Jacob's situation very uneasy; but he could not determine to leave it till God commanded him.

3 And the Lord said unto Jacob, perhaps in a dream, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be 4 with thee, and deal well with thee. And Jacob sent and called 5 Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it [is] not toward

- me as before ; but the God of my father, *whom he worshipped, and with whom my forefathers were in covenant*, hath been with me, *to bid me depart*. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father, *as became a faithful servant to do*.
- 7 And your father hath deceived me, *and dealt very unjustly by me, for he hath changed my wages ten times ; but God sus-*
- 8 *fered him not to hurt me*. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages ; then all the cattle bare speckled : and if he said thus, The ring streaked shall be thy hire ; then bare
- 9 all the cattle ring streaked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given [them] to me ; *it was no fraud of mine, but the hand of God, what he showed me in a vision*.
- 10 And, *or For*, it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold the rams which leaped upon the cattle [were] ring streaked, speckled, and grised ; *whereby I was taught that the breeding of the cattle in that manner was by the providence of God*.
- 11 And the angel of God—spoke unto me ; in a dream, [sayings] Jacob : And I said, Here [am] I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle [are] ring streaked, speckled, and grised :
- 12 for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I [am] the God of Bethel, *who appeared unto thee there, where thou anointedst the pillar, [and] where thou vowedst a vow unto me : now, arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred*. And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, [Is there] yet any portion or inheritance,
- 13 *any hope of benefit, for us in our father's house ? Are we not counted of him strangers ? dealt with as strangers, rather than children ? for he hath sold us to thee for fourteen years' service, and hath quite devoured also our money, wholly converted that to his own use, which in equity was due to us for our portions, and for our husband's service*. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that [is] ours, and our children's : now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, *do, and we consent to go with thee*.
- 17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels ; And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. *This Jacob had a right to do, for he took only what were his own*. And he contrived to do it while Laban went to shear his sheep, and was therefore at a distance : and Rachel
- 20 had stolen the images that [were] her father's.* And Jacob stole

* The Teraphim or household gods, like the *Lares* and *Penates* of the Romans ; probably little images in the shape of men, to whom these idolatrous people prayed, and of whom they asked counsel about secret things. Rachel perhaps had still a superstitious regard for these ; or she might fear that her father, by consulting them, would find which way they were gone ; or it might be to convince him of his folly, that she took them away.

- away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled ; *he went without his knowledge, consent, or good*
- 21 *will*. So he fled with all that he had ; and he rose up, and passed over the river *Euphrates*, and set his face [toward] the mount Gilad, *which joins to mount Lebanon*.
- 22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.
- 23 And he took his brethren with him, *collected all his servants and relations*, and pursued after him seven days' journey, *intending to strip him of every thing, and perhaps make him a slave during his whole life ;* and they overtook him in the
- 24 mount Gilad. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad, *neither threatenings nor*
- 25 *reproaches*. Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount : and Laban and his brethren
- 26 pitched in the mount of Gilad. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares unto me, and carried away my daughters, as captives [taken] with the sword ! *He speaks as if they had been taken away by force, whereas it appears from v. 16, they were willing to go,*
- 27 *it was therefore a slanderous accusation*. Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with
- 28 songs, with tabret, and with harp ? And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters ? *He pretends love, but hatred was in his heart, and Jacob knew him well :* thou hast now
- 29 done foolishly in [so] doing. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt, *and it was his intention to do it :* but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.
- 30 And now, [though] thou wouldst needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, [yet] wherefore hast thou stolen my gods ? *Precious gods, that could be stolen !*
- 31 And Jacob, *protesting his innocence in that and in every other particular*, answered his slanderous suggestions, and said to Laban, Because I was afraid : for I said, Peradventure thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me : *therefore I*
- 32 *went secretly away :* but With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live : before our brethren discern thou what [is] thine with me, and take [it] to thee. For Jacob knew
- 33 not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maid servants' tents ; but he found [them] not. Then went he out
- 34 of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camels' furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but
- 35 found [them] not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot *with decency* rise up before thee *in my present situation ;* for the custom of women [is] upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

- 26 And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban ; *it was not his turn to expostulate, and he does it in a very wise, spirited, and admirable manner* : and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What [is] my trespass ? what [is] my sin, that thou
 27 hast so hotly pursued after me ? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff ? set [it] here before my brethren and thy brethren,
 28 that they may judge betwixt us both. This twenty years [have] I [been] with thee ; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young *partly by reason of my care and diligence in ordering them, but principally from God's blessing upon thee*
 29 *for my sake*, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn [of beasts] I brought not unto thee ; I bare the loss of it ; of my hand didst thou require it, [whether]
 40 stolen by day, or stolen by night. [Thus] I was ; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night ; and my
 41 sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house ; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle : and thou hast changed my wages ten times.* Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, *the God whom Isaac worshipped with reverence and fear*, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. But God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked [thee] yesternight.
 43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, [These] daughters [are] my daughters, and [these] children [are] my children, and [these] cattle [are] my cattle, and all that thou seest [is] mine : *surely this was false ; but he endeavoured to put on the appearance of tenderness*, and said, What can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have borne ? *how should I be able to go about to hurt them,*
 44 *seeing they are my own flesh and blood ?* Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou ; and let it be for a
 45 witness between me and thee. And Jacob consented and took a stone, or a heap of stones, and set it up [for] a pillar, as a
 46 monument of the covenant. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones ; and they took stones, and made an heap ; and
 47 they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha : but Jacob called it Galeed.† And Laban said, This heap [is] a witness, *a memorial, which may be alleged in after times as a witness between me and thee this day*. There-
 49 fore was the name of it called Galeed ; And Mizpah ; *that is,*

* Dr. Kemnicott supposes that Jacob lived in Haran forty years, viz. fourteen years in Laban's house, a covenant servant for Rachel and Leah ; twenty years in Laban's neighbourhood, as a friend ; and six years in Laban's house, a covenant servant for cattle. Remarks, p. 27-33.

† Both these words Jegarsahadutha and Galeed, are of the same signification, that is, the heap of witness ; only Laban spake in the Syrian and Jacob in the Hebrew tongue.

a beacon, or watch tower, for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.
 50 *Now this was the covenant ; If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take [other] wives beside my daughters, no man [is] with us ; see, God [is] witness betwixt me and*
 51 *thee. And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold*
 52 *[this] pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee ; This heap [be] witness, and [this] pillar [be] witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this*
 53 *heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Nabor my father, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacobswore by the fear of his father Isaac, the God whom Isaac feared, and before whom he walked.*
 54 *Then Jacob killed beasts and offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread ; and they did eat bread,*
 55 *and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them, wished them all hastiness and prosperity : and Laban departed, and returned unto his place. Thus God overruled his cruel designs, and they parted in peace.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**HAT a happy thing is it to have God's blessing ! *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof ; the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle on a thousand hills ; he is the great God of nature and providence. He can make rich, notwithstanding the oppression of the wicked ; when men deal cunningly he is above them ; he can easily controul the spirits of men, and turn foes into friends ; and make all those affairs terminate well, that appear dark and gloomy. Worldly prosperity and success is agreeable when the hand of God is seen in it : it is his blessing that maketh rich and happy.*

2. Here is a good lesson for servants and masters. Servants may see what they should be, and masters what they should not be. Jacob was a faithful servant, and minded his master's business amidst heat and cold. Thus servants should take as much care of their masters' goods as if they were their own. Jacob was content with his homely fare, with what his master allowed him, without plundering from the flock : a good example to servants, to be content with their provisions, and not take what they know is not designed for them. Amidst all his hardships, and the unkind and unjust treatment he met with from Laban, he was careful of every thing : so ought all servants to be. Masters may here see what they should not be : they should not be hard and unreasonable ; but give good and faithful servants encouragement and suitable rewards : they should not be made to suffer, as Jacob was, for what they cannot help. They should, as Paul ob-

serves, give servants what is just and equal ; and servants should show all good fidelity.

3. Let us remember God, as the God of our fathers. When entering into covenant with God or man, this should be an engagement to us to be faithful, 'It is our fathers' God by whom we swear.' His kindness, and care, and fidelity to them, are encouragements to us, and should excite us to fear him, to walk before him all the days of our life, and to exalt and honour him by our fidelity..

4. Let us maintain a constant regard to the omniscience of God, to secure us in our duty to our fellow creatures : so both Laban and Jacob did. We all stand related to the same God, and therefore should love as brethren, show a peaceful and candid spirit, be willing to agree when differences arise. God is witness between us ; he sees and knows whether we are faithful to our promise, or not ; that we do not go beyond or defraud one another. Let us therefore *set the Lord always before us, and sanctify him in our hearts*, as Isaac and Jacob did, and *make him our fear* ; then shall we be quiet from the fear of evil, and be preserved from wicked and unreasonable men.

CHAP. XXXII.

Jacob being now on his return to Canaan, we are here informed of some remarkable providences which he met with in his way.

- 1 **A**ND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him, *in some visible and glorious appearance, to comfort him against the danger by Esau.* And when Jacob saw them, he said, *on account of their number, order, and power, and their attendance on the divine presence, This [is] God's host : and he called the name of that place Mahanaim, that is, two hosts or camps ; probably one before and the other behind him ; but they soon disappeared, which much discouraged him.*
- 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom ; *not as if the whole of Edom was Esau's, but to Seir, a part of it which he had probably conquered, according to the blessing of his father,*
- 4 (ch. xxvii. 40.) *By thy sword shalt thou live.* And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau ; *he uses this respectful term to mollify his resentment ; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now, as a stranger and an exile : And am now returning home, but not to be a burden to my relations, for I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men servants, and women servants : and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.*

- 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him ; *probably with an intention to destroy thee, and possess thy substance. So Jacob thought,*
- 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed : and he divided the people that [was] with him, and the flocks, and herds,
- 8 and the camels, into two bands ; And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape ; *thus making the best preparation he could, and then betook himself to prayer.*
- 9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee : I am not worthy of, *or I am less than the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed*
- 10 unto thy servant, *in making and performing thy gracious promises :* for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, *a poor exile, alone, on foot, and having nothing ;* and now I am become two
- 11 bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau : for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, [and] the mother with the children. *Thus he expressed his fear and his danger, and then pleads the divine*
- 12 *promise.* And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude ; *and wilt thou not perform thy word ?*
- 13 And he lodged there that same night ; and took of that which came to his hand, *which he had to give, a present for Esau his brother ; as he prayed and trusted in God, so he uses*
- 14 *means ;* Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two
- 15 hundred ewes, and twenty rams, Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals ; *a noble present, five hundred and eighty head of*
- 16 *cattle !* And he delivered [them] into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves ; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove, *to mitigate his displeasure by degrees ; every new drove, every new speech from the servant, would tend to soften his anger.*
- 17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose [art] thou ? and whither goest thou ? and whose [are] these before thee ? Then thou shalt say, [They be] thy servant Jacob's ; it [is] a present sent unto my lord Esau : and, behold, also
- 18 he [is] behind us. And so commanded he the second and the third, and all that followed the drives, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him. And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob [is] behind us.
- 20 For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face ; peradventure

- 21 he will accept of me. So went the present over before him ;
 22 and himself lodged that night in the company. And he rose
 up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women ser-
 vants, and his eleven sons, and *Dinah his daughter*, and pass-
 23 ed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them
 over the brook, and sent over that he had.
- 24 And Jacob was left alone ; *he stayed behind the company in
 some retired place to pray, and spend the night in devotion :*
 and there wrestled a man with him, *probably an angel of God*,
 25 until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he pre-
 vailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh ;
 and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrest-
 led with him ; *the hip bone slipped out of its socket. This was
 designed to show how easily the divine messenger could have*
 26 *conquered him, though he suffered him to prevail.* And he said,
 Let me go, for the day breaketh ; *this he said to show the
 prevalency of Jacob's prayers with God, and also to quicken
 and encourage him to persist in his conflict :* And he said, I
 will not let thee go, except thou bless me *with protection in*
 27 *this time of danger.* And he said unto him, What [is] thy
 28 name ? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be
 called no more Jacob, but Israel, *that is, a prince of God :* for as
 a prince hast thou power with God, *by thy earnest prayers,*
 and with men, *Esau and Laban*, and hast prevailed, and shalt
 still prevail : *of which this present conflict is an emblem, to en-
 29 courage thy faith and hope in God.* And Jacob, *encouraged by
 all this goodness,* asked [him,] and said, Tell [me,] I pray
 thee, thy name, *that I may retain a grateful remembrance of
 thee, and make honourable mention of thy name to others : but
 the angel waved an answer to this,* And he said, Wherefore
 [is] it [that] thou dost ask after my name ? *to know that will be
 of no use to thee.* And as he was departing, he blessed him
 there ; *granted his request, and confirmed his former promises.*
- 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, *that is, the
 face of God :* for I have seen God face to face ; *not his divine
 essence, but in a more manifest, familiar, and friendly manner
 than in common visions ; and my life is preserved from Esau,
 who threatened it, by the divine promise and assurance of help.*
- 31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and
 32 he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel
 to perpetuate the memory of this honour done to Jacob, eat not
 [of] the sinew which shrank, which [is] upon the hollow of
 the thigh, and *fixes the thigh bone in the socket*, unto this day :
 because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew
 that shrank.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be thankful for the care of angels, who are God's host. The angels of the Lord encamp about them that fear him. Though they are not seen visibly, yet good men see them by faith; and God *gives his angels charge concerning them, to keep them in all their ways.* No doubt we receive many kind offices from them, when we know it not; and they often preserve us from danger, and bear us up, lest we dash our foot against a stone. We may cheerfully go out to the duties of life, while under their care; and should daily bless God who sends *his angels as ministering spirits, to minister to the heirs of salvation.*

2. Let us learn to make prayer our refuge in every time of difficulty. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, saith God, and I will hear, and deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Jacob's experience confirms the truth and the advantage of this. *Is any man afflicted? let him pray.* Jacob sought the Lord, and he heard him, and saved him from that which he feared. This eases the mind, supports the spirit, and secures deliverance. For God *hath never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain.*

3. In prayer let us acknowledge our unworthiness, and plead the divine favour toward us, v. 10. This temper is requisite in order to our being accepted. We are not worthy of the least blessing, much less of the great things we are seeking after. The best of us have need daily to make this acknowledgment; and this is the frame, above all others, that prepares us to receive divine mercy. For God *resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble: With this man will he dwell, who is humble, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at his word.* We should also recollect his past goodness; he hath begun already to show us great kindness. Let us *bless the Lord, and not forget any of his benefits.* Let us also plead his promises that *he will still do us good; for faithful is he who hath promised, who also will do it.* These are at once a direction and an encouragement to our prayers.

4. We learn holy importunity in prayer to God. The prophet alludes to this story, *Hos. xii. 4. Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us.* It is great condescension in God to represent things in this view. Let us therefore learn to continue instant in prayer; to *pray without ceasing*; our Redeemer himself used *strong cries and tears.* We see that *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; and this is an encouragement to come *boldly to the throne of grace, to seek mercy and grace to help in every time of need.* Let us then, as the prophet exhorts, *stir up ourselves to take hold on God.* The best way to be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men, is to be earnest with God in prayer; *keep not silence, give him no rest, till he come and bless us.*

5. Prudence and devotion should always go together. Prudent precaution should always be added to the prayers we offer in difficulties and emergencies ; to ask success without this, is mockery. We should contrive our affairs prudently ; *be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*. Learn especially in time of danger, to walk circumspectly ; remember, *a soft answer turneth away wrath, and a pleasant maketh room for him that offereth it*. We must be willing to purchase peace at a dear rate, and be sensible of its value, or we cannot expect God to give it. In all such cases *wisdom is profitable to direct*. God will help us in the way of prudence and diligence ; watchfulness and prayer should always be joined together. Thus we shall find, as the next chapter plainly proves, *that when a man's ways please the Lord, he can make even his enemies to be at peace with him*.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Jacob was now returning over the brook to his family and flock, to see what God would do for him in the affair of his brother Esau ; and here we have their friendly meeting, their brotherly converse, and their amiable parting.

1 **A**ND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto
 2 the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost, *reserving the dearest to the safest place*. And he passed over before them, *exposing himself to hazard for the safety of his family ;* and bowed himself to the ground seven times, *in token of his subjection, until he came near to his brother, trusting in God that he should be delivered from him*. And Esau ran to meet him, and, *God having changed his heart, he* embraced him, and *with the most tender affection* fell on his neck and kissed him : and they wept ; *Jacob for joy, and Esau perhaps for shame to think of his ill design, and how God had overruled it*. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children ; and said, Who [are] those with thee ? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.* *This was a serious and pious reply ; he owns God's hand in them, esteems them a favour, and*
 6 *that it was a mercy to have so large a family*. Then the handmaids came near, they and their children, and they bowed
 7 themselves. And Leah also with her children, came near,

* Xenophon represents Cyrus as saying, when he was dying. *The children which the gods have given me.*

- and bowed themselves : and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves, *all paid their respects to Esau.* And he said what [incensest] thou by all this drove which I met? *the servants had told him before; but he asks the question, that he might civilly refuse the present.* And he, Jacob, said, [These are] to find grace in the sight of my lord.
- 9 And Esau, *unwilling to rob him,* said, I have enough, my brother ; keep that thou hast unto thyself ; *I neither need*
- 10 *nor desire them.* And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, *if thou art fully reconciled,* then receive my present at my hand : for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me ; *thy meeting me in this peaceable manner, is very comfortable and refreshing ; and an evident token of God's*
- 11 *favour to me.* Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee ; *this gift, which, as I received it from God, so I heartily give it with my blessing, and pray that God would abundantly bless it to thee ; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough, and to spare.* And he urged
- 12 him, and he took [it.] And he, Esau, said, Let us take our journey, and let us go to my habitation, where I may requite *thy kindness,* and I will go before thee. And he, Jacob, said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children [are] tender, and the flocks and herds with young [are] with me : and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.
- 14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant : and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord, unto Seir. *It is probable he and his family went there to pay his brother a visit, though it is not mentioned afterward.*
- 15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that [are] with me, to be thy guard : And he said, What needeth it ? *I have train enough ; God's host are with me, and will protect me :* let me find grace in the sight of my lord,
- 16 *let me have thy leave to go alone.* So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.
- 17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, or tent, and made booths for his cattle : therefore the name of the place is called Succoth, *that is, booths.*
- 18 And Jacob came to Shalem a city of Shechem, which [is] in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram ; *that is, he came safe and sound ; (so the Hebrews understand Shalem) his halting was cured, and he was preserved from all evil in his journey from Padanaram to Shechem, or Sychem, in the land of Canaan ; and he pitched his tent before the city, for the convenience of his family and flocks.* And because it was the land of promise, and the time of possession was not yet come, he bought a parcel of a field, a little parcel of ground, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children or subjects of

Hamor, Shechem's father,* for an hundred pieces of money.†
 20. And he erected there an altar *for a thanksgiving*, and called it Eleloheisrael, to God, the God of Israel, who had delivered him from Laban and Esau, and given him a new name. *It was here Abraham built his first altar to God.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **S**EE here an instance of the benefit of humility and submission : these two brothers happily met ; but if Jacob had entertained some false notion of honour, and that it was beneath him to stoop, how sad would have been the consequence ! Peace is so valuable a blessing, that a great deal should be parted with, or borne, to secure it. *The meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in abundance of peace. Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !* Had Jacob been obstinate, he and his wives and children might have been destroyed, and his cattle carried away ; and the whole story would have been a melancholy tragedy. Submission was the wisest step in such a case ; it recovered the lost affection of his brother, and secured his own safety and peace. This is a temper which the gospel requires, *1 Peter v. 5. yea, all of you be subject one to another ; and be clothed with humility ; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

2. We see that the hearts of all men are in God's hand, and he can easily turn them. His secret influences can quell the most turbulent, and soften the most obdurate hearts ; can turn the bitterest enemies into kind friends. It is good to make him our trust, who ruleth the spirits of the mighty, and restrains the fury of the oppressor.

3. How happy is a good man in the divine favour ! Jacob acknowledged that he had all those good things, because God had blessed him ; his comforts had a peculiar relish and sweetness, as coming from the divine favour. He refuses the guard of Esau, because God was with him, and his angels encamped round him. *Hapthy is he that maketh the Lord his trust, for he shall not be afraid in the day of evil.*

4. Let ministers and parents learn prudence and tenderness from the example of Jacob before us. The weakness of reason and age is to be considered : no heavy tasks in religious services should be laid on youth ; they must be led as they are able to bear it ; no doubtful disputations should be taught them, but the plain things of the gospel, which are milk for babes. Ministers

* He only of Hamor's sons is mentioned, because he was more honourable than the rest of his brethren, (*ch. xxxiv. 19*) and therefore might probably transact this affair with Jacob, the rest consenting thereto.

† The original is *Lambs* ; but it seems to have been money with the figure of a lamb stamped upon it. The Athenian money was called an *Ox*, for the like reason. So we used to call some coins an *Ang-l*, or a *Jacobus*, because those figures were upon them.

must look well to their flocks ; consider the circumstances and capacities of their hearers, that they may lead them on with prudence and caution. A greater than Jacob hath set us a pattern, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who *fed his flock like a shepherd ; carried the lambs in his arms, and gently led those that were with young ;* thus let us feed and treat his lambs.

5. Let us not be ashamed to own our obligations to God, and the relation in which we stand to him. When Jacob was asked, *Who are these ?* he humbly and piously replied, *The children which God hath graciously given thy servant ;* he was not ashamed to own this. Children are an heritage from the Lord. When we mention them, let it be to the glory of God, and as his gift. Thus let us acknowledge the loving kindness of the Lord. Jacob also ascribes his success to God : *God hath dealt graciously with me, given me more than I desired ;* through his blessing I have gotten wealth, *and have enough, and to spare ;* and when he came to his settlement, he set up an altar to the God of Israel. Thus *in all our ways let us acknowledge him ;* and ascribe all our comforts and success to him. Let his worship be our daily business ; let us never be ashamed of the Lord as our God ; but render hearty love and grateful obedience to him, who hath dealt bountifully with us.

CHAP. XXXIV.

In the former chapter we find Jacob peaceably settled in the land of Canaan ; but he was born to more than common trouble ; and here evil comes upon him out of his own house, the children of his own bowels prove as thorns in his side.

1 **A**N D Dinah the only daughter of Leah, [which] she bare unto Jacob, a fine and favourite child, about fifteen years of age, went out to see the daughters of the land, at a time when
2 there was a great feast in the city of Shechem.* And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. We do not find that he used any force in the case ; but she being from under her parents' eye, in bad company and the way of
3 temptation, was easily seduced. And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel, spake to her heart, perhaps won her affections.

4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get
5 me this damsel to wife. And Jacob heard, no doubt with great grief and concern, that he had defiled Dinah his daughter.

* Josephus.

- ter : now his sons were with his cattle in the field : and Jacob held his peace until they were come, *that he might consult with them what to do.* And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him, *and make a proposal of marriage between Shechem and Dinah, and other branches of the family.* And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard [it :] and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter ; *it was a base, foolish, and sinful deed ; an insult on Israel, and on the good patriarch ; which thing ought not to be done in a family consecrated to God, and which duty, decency, and hospitality forbade.* And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter : I pray you give her him to wife. And make ye marriages with us, [and] give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.
- 10 And ye shall dwell with us : and the land shall be before you ; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein. And Shechem *seconded the proposal, and said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, grant me this request, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.* Ask me never so much dowry *for her portion, and gift for reparation of the wrong done her, and as a testimony of my respect to you, and kindness to her,* and I will give according as ye shall say unto me : but give me the damsel to wife.
- 13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, *or seemed to consent ; though they never intended to give her in marriage to Shechem, because he had defiled Dinah their sister : and they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised ; for that [were] a reproach unto us : pretending honour and conscience, and a regard to religion, while they were dealing deceitfully :* But in this will we consent unto you : If ye will be as we [be,] that every male of you be circumcised ; Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised ; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone. *It was exceeding wrong in itself to offer this sign of God's covenant to the Canaanites ; but abominable to do it with an ill design, and with a lie in their mouths.* And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.
- 19 And the young man, *out of love to Dinah,* deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter : and he [was] more honourable than all the house of his father ; *was greatly esteemed both by his own family and country ; which was the reason he prevailed so much with them in so strange a request.*

- 20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,
- 21 These men [are] peaceable with us ; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein ; for the land, behold, [it is] large enough for them, *and a great deal of it is uncultivated ; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. Thus many pretend to speak for the public interest, when they aim only at their own private advantage.*
- 22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they [are] circumcised ; *only let us comply in this one thing, and we shall have great advantage ; for*
- 23 [Shall] not their cattle and their substance and every beast of their's [be] our's, *by commerce, marriage, &c.* only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us. And unto
- 24 Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city ; *all were prevailed upon, either out of love to their young prince, or from the hope of advantage ; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city ; which being done without knowledge and faith, was a profanation of God's ordinance, for which they were justly punished.*
- 25 And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore and unable to defend themselves, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, *got together a band of men, probably all the servants who were trained in the house ; and they took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, perhaps in the night, and, breaking open the house of*
- 26 Shechem, slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. And The sons of Jacob, *Simeon and Levi, with their attendants,* came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister ; *one of them had done so, and the others did not censure*
- 28 *him for it.* They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which [was] in the city, and that which [was]
- 29 in the field, And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that [was] in the house, *in every house ; chiefly Shechem's, where Dinah was. They might have taken her without all these ; but they regarded the spoil, and basely murdered the men to secure it.*
- 30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me, *not only discomposed my mind, but entangled my affairs, and exposed me to imminent danger, to make me to stink, or render me odious,* among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites : and I [being] few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me ; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. *To which they make*

81 *this sassy answer ; And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot ? No ; he ought not. But this was no good reason for all their baseness and cruelty. Had often war been declared, it would have altered the case ; but it was done by treachery, under the cloak of religion. It is likely Jacob sent back the women and children, and the spoils. We read no more of Dinah ; some rabbies say, she was afterward Job's wife, However, her story teaches us the following lessons.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **S**EE the fatal consequence of ungoverned appetites and passions. A vain curiosity betrayed Dinah into this snare ; and was the source of all these dreadful calamities. She was an only daughter, thought it was melancholy to stay at home, and therefore went to this festival or ball to divert herself. Observe what sad consequences pride and vanity produce ; some light or indecent behaviour perhaps betrayed her. This story, yes, daily experience, shows the reasonableness of Paul's advice, that young women should be chaste, keepers at home. They that will indulge themselves in the gaieties of the age, run into the way of temptation, and generally mourn at the last, repent it all their days, and prove a grief of heart to all their pious friends. Shechem's fiery passions overcame him ; he saw, and took her. It is good for all, especially young men, to make a covenant with their eyes. *Whence come wars and fightings, death and damnation ? but from unbridled lusts.* We have need to pray, that God would keep us, and to watch also, that we enter not into temptation.

2. How abominable is it to make religion an instrument of deceiving and injuring those, who trust to us on account of it. God is never more dishonoured than when this is the case. Hypocrisy in all cases is detestable ; but when it is made an instrument to destroy and ruin others, it dishonours God as much as possible, and brings the most aggravated guilt on our own souls. These young apostates had God in their mouths, and Satan in their hearts ; they cloaked their bloody design under the pretence of religion ; God's name was blasphemed by them. What must the heathen think of the God of Abraham, and of his covenant ? and how would they curse the sacrament that sealed it ! It is a sad thing indeed when religion is made a cloak of covetousness, cruelty, and maliciousness ; and God will judge and severely punish such persons.

3. The best education may not be successful to form the minds and manners of those who have enjoyed it. Would one have expected so detestable a conduct from the sons of good Jacob ? They were devoted to God, instructed and admonished, had good examples, and the prayers of their father ; yet they proved a

scandal to religion, and a trouble and grief to their aged parents. Thus children of God's covenant, and of God's people, sometimes prove children that cause shame, and are a trouble and reproach to them that bore them and brought them up. But there will be a terrible reckoning another day for those children who bring a disgrace on religion, and are the cause of grief and sorrow to their pious relations and friends. One of the Apocryphal writers says, *Judith ix. 2. that God gave Simeon a sword to take vengeance of the strangers ; but Jacob thought otherwise, and expressed his abhorrence of this fact with his dying breath, ch. xlix. 5, 6, 7. Simeon and Levi are brethren ; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united ; cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ; and their wrath, for it was cruel : I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.*

CHAP. XXXV.

Jacob having been greatly distressed on account of the murder of the Shechemites, by which his stay in that country was rendered painful and dangerous, God sends him to Bethel, about thirty miles south of Shechem, where he builds an altar : after which we have an account of the death of Rachel and Isaac.

- 1 **A**ND God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there : and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother ; there offer sacrifice, pay thy vow with thanksgiving for thy former deliverance, and strengthen thy faith against thy present fears ; for, as thou wast delivered from that danger,
- 2 so shalt thou be from this. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that [were] with him, Put away the strange gods that [are] among you, (either the *Teraphim* stolen from Laban, or some images taken out of Shechem) and be clean, and change your garments, out of reverence for that God before whom you are to appear :
- 3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel : and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which [were] in their hand, and [all their] ear-rings, idolatrous jewels, and superstitious marks, which [were] in their ears ; and Jacob hid them under the oak* which
- 4 [was] by Shechem. And they journeyed : and the terror of God was upon the cities that [were] round about them, and

* The oak was often dedicated to false gods. This might be the place where such superstitions had been practised ; and here he made a grave for those images which had been employed in this idolatry.

they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. *Had it not been for this miraculous terror on their minds, they might easily have gathered together, pursued, and destroyed them all.*

- 6 So Jacob came *safe* to Luz, which [is] in the land of Canaan, that [is,] Bethel, he and all the people that [were] with
- 7 him. And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel, *that is, the God of Bethel* : because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. *Before, he called it Bethel ; now, upon God's renewing his grace unto him, he added the name of God to it.*
- 8 But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died ; *she was a pious, prudent woman, and, after the death of Rebekah, came to live in Jacob's family ; where she was much wanted, much respected, and at her death greatly lamented ; and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak : and the name of it was called Allonbachuth, that is, the oak of weeping. The Jews say, Rebekah had sent her to fetch Jacob from Laban's house, as she had promised to do, when it was proper for him to return.*
- 9 And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. *This is the seventh time that*
- 10 *God revealed himself unto Jacob in a special manner. And God said unto him, Thy name [is] Jacob : thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name ; and he called his name Israel. God confirmed the change of his name, to assure him, that as he prevailed over Esau, so now*
- 11 *he should prevail over those of whom he was afraid. And God said unto him, I [am] God Almighty, therefore able to fulfil all my promises : be fruitful and multiply ; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, (hereby confirming and enlarging the promise made ch. xvii. 5. xxviii. 3.) and kings shall come out of thy loins, tribes for number and power, equal*
- 12 *to so many nations ; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I*
- 13 *give the land. And God, the divine majesty or Shekinah, went up from him in the place where he talked with him.*
- 14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, [even] a pillar of stone ; *either the old pillar, or one like it : and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil*
- 15 *thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel. Thus he did according to his vow thirty years before.*
- 16 And they journeyed from Bethel ; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath, or *Bethlehem* : and Rachel
- 17 travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, *to encourage her, Fear not ; thou shalt have this son also.*
- 18 And it came to pass, *after the child was born, and as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Beno-*

- ni, *that is, the son of my sorrow* ; but his father called him Benjamin, *that is, the son of the right hand, for he shall always be*
19 *near and dear to me, as my right hand.* And Rachel died, and was buried in the way near to Ephrath, which [is] Bethlehem, *where Christ was born, and the infants were slain.* And
20 Jacob set a pillar upon her grave : that [is] the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day ; *at the time Moses wrote this account, and long after, to the days of Samuel, (1 Sam. x. 2.)*
21 And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar, *or, the tower of the flock, where there was excellent pasture.*
22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine : *this was an horrid incest ; he thought to have kept it secret, as a thing he had cause to be ashamed of : and Israel heard [it] with just indignation, and no doubt reprov'd him for it, and abandoned Bilhah : Jacob remembered it when he came to bless Reuben, and he lost his birthright for it.* Now the sons of Jacob were twelve, *which were the heads of the twelve tribes of*
23 *Israel : The sons of Leah were six : Reuben, Jacob's first-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and*
24 *Zebulun : The sons of Rachel were two ; Joseph, and Benjamin.* And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, *were two ;*
25 *Dan and Naphtali : And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, were two ; Gad, and Asher : these [are] the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram, all except Benjamin.*
27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which [is] Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. *No doubt he often visited him before, but now came to dwell near him, to assist and comfort him in his old age.*
28 And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore
29 *years, five years longer than Abraham.* And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, [being] old and full of days : *he was one of the most perfect characters in holy writ ; he was blameless, except in denying his wife ; he was a peaceable devotional man ; of a sweet temper, and his heart was much in heaven.* And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him in the cave of Machpelah ; *and probably on this occasion their friendship was more perfectly established.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **G**OD remembers those solemn vows by which we are devoted to him, and therefore we should not forget them; he put Jacob in mind of his. Let us ever be mindful of our covenant; let no time wear out a sense of our obligation to perform our vows; let us not defer or delay to pay them, when it is in our power; but ever remember our solemn engagements, and act suitably to them. *It is better not vow, than to vow, and not pay.*

2. It is necessary to prepare for the solemnities of divine worship, by putting away sin from our hearts and houses. The strange Gods must be put away; every thing that stands in competition with God's honour, glory, and worship. *Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings; put them all away; harbour no sin, no lust; What have we to do any more with idols? If we would appear comfortably before God, let us cleanse ourselves from all our pollutions. Masters of families should be solicitous about this, and not suffer sin upon those who are under their care: they should put away iniquity from their tabernacles, else their service will not be acceptable. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, saith the Lord.*

3. See how easily God awes the minds of men: he brought terror on the minds of the inhabitants of Canaan. This is a great security and mercy to his people, that he has access to the hearts of all men. How cheerfully may we trust God in the way of duty; *he can make even our enemies to be at peace with us, and so influence their minds, that they shall do us no harm.*

4. There is a respect due to worth, even in the lowest stations of life. Deborah died very much lamented; she was a prudent, religious woman, and well beloved in the family. Virtue is not less virtue for being in a low station, though vice in a high one is more aggravated. A regard is due to old and faithful servants; they are such blessings to a family, that they ought to be respected, and, if possible, comfortably provided for. God deals so with his faithful servants; and so should we by ours.

5. How often are we mistaken in our desires! *Give me children, or I die*, said Rachel: God granted her request, and she died. We often wish for those things which would prove our greatest detriment. When Jacob's other wives left off bearing, her being with child filled her with complacency and satisfaction; and perhaps she now looked on them with some degree of pride and contempt. God often punishes irregular passions, by granting men their wishes, and giving them up to their own hearts' lusts. Let our desires be under the conduct of reason and religion. Let us cultivate submission to the will of God; which will moderate and regulate them. Very excellent is the advice of David, *delight thyself also in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thine heart; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass.*

CHAP. XXXVI.

Contains an account of Esau and his posterity ; to show the accomplishment of the promises, ch. xxii. 17. xxv. 23. xxvii. 39, 40. and to remind the Israelites, that the Edomites were their brethren.

- 1 **N**OW these [are] the generations of Esau, who [is]
- 2 **E**dom. Esau took his wives, *other wives than those beforementioned, ch. xxvi. 34. of the daughters of Canaan ;*
- 3 *Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the*
- 4 *daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite : And*
- 5 *Bashemath Ishmael's daughter sister of Nebajoth. And*
- 6 *Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz ; and Bashemath bare Reuel ;*
- 7 *And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah ; these*
- 8 *[are] the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.*
- 9 *And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters,*
- 10 *and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his*
- 11 *beasts, and all his substance, which came to him on the death*
- 12 *of his father Isaac, and that which he had got in the land of*
- 13 *Canaan ; and went into the country, the land of Seir, from*
- 14 *the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more*
- 15 *than that they might dwell together ; and the land wherein*
- 16 *they were strangers could not bear them because of their cat-*
- 17 *tle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir : Esau [is] Edom.*
- 18 *And these [are] the generations of Esau the father of the*
- 19 *Edomites in mount Seir : These [are] the names of Esau's*
- 20 *sons ; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the*
- 21 *son of Bashemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz*
- 22 *were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And*
- 23 *Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son ; and she bare*
- 24 *to Eliphaz Amalek : these [were] the sons of Adah Esau's*
- 25 *wife. And these [are] the sons of Reuel ; Nahath, and Ze-*
- 26 *rah, Shammah, and Mizzah : these were the sons of Bashe-*
- 27 *math Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Aholibamah,*
- 28 *the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife :*
- 29 *and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.*
- 30 *These [were] dukes of the sons of Esau, princes or heads*
- 31 *of their several families or principalities : the sons of Eliphaz*
- 32 *the firstborn [son] of Esau ; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke*
- 33 *Zepho, duke Kenaz, Duke Korah, duke Gatam, [and] duke*
- 34 *Amalek : these [are] the dukes [that came] of Eliphaz in the*
- 35 *land of Edom ; these [were] the sons of Adah. And these*
- 36 *[are] the sons of Reuel Esau's son ; duke Nahath, duke*
- 37 *Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah : these [are] the dukes*
- 38 *[that came] of Reuel in the land of Edom ; these [are] the*
- 39 *sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these [are] the sons*

- of Aholibamah Esau's wife ; duke Jeshu, duke Jaalam, duke Korah : these [were] the dukes [that came] of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. These [are] the sons of Esau, who [is] Edom, and these [are] their dukes.
- These [are] the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land ; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan : these [are] the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. And the children of Lotan, were Hori, and Heman ; and Lotan's sister [was] Timna. And the children of Shobal [were] these ; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ehal, Shepho, and Onam. And these [are] the children of Zibeon ; both Ajah, and Anah : this [was that] Anah that found the mules* in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. And the children of Anah [were] these ; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. And these [are] the children of Dishon ; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. The children of Ezer [are] these ; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan. The children of Dishan [are] these ; Uz, and Arap. These [are] the dukes [that came] of the Horites ; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan : these [are] the dukes [that came] of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.
- And these [are] the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom : and the name of his city [was] Dinhabab. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead. And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead : and the name of his city [was] Avith. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth [by] the river reigned in his stead. And Saul died, and Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. And Baalhanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead : and the name of his city [was] Pau ; and his wife's name [was] Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.
- And these [are] the names of the dukes [that came] of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names ; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, Duke Magdiel, duke Iram : these [be] the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations, in the land of their possession : he [is] Esau the father of the Edomites.

* Or rather, a gigantic race of people called *Esimi*. (*Deut. ii. 10*) whom this Anah found, that is, encountered or fell upon unexpectedly. *Edm*

CHAP. XXXVII.

We are now entering on the history of Joseph, who was a most amiable and excellent character. 'I believe,' says a good writer, 'it is impossible for any one in the world to read the history of Joseph, as related by the sacred historians, without being prepossessed in favour of that great man. The occurrences of his life are so peculiar; the extraordinary providences that attended him, are so remarkable; the moderation and equity of his conduct, are so apparent through the whole of his behaviour; that no person of humanity can help sharing with him in his misfortunes, taking pleasure in his prosperity, and admiring the life and character of a person who seemed to be the favourite both of God and man.' Most of the remainder of this book is taken up with his history. This chapter gives an account of his brethren's great hatred to him; their infamous design to murder him; their selling him as a slave; and the behaviour of his father when he was told of his death.

- 1 **A**ND Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These [are] the generations of Jacob, the events or occurrences that befel him and his family. Joseph [being] seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad [was] with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report; the report of their wicked conduct and conversation, or ill usage of him; this was one cause of their hatred of him. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he [was] the son of his old age,* the son of his dearest wife, whom she bore after long barrenness: Benjamin indeed was younger, but being only four years old, he had not so engaged his father's affection: and he made him a coat of [many] colours; a rich striped garment, such as distinguished him from the rest of his brethren; being a mark of his father's favour, and of his giving him the birthright, which Reuben had forfeited. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him; all their words and actions were ill-natured and churlish.
- 2 And what confirmed their hatred of him was, that Joseph dreamed a dream, which probably he did not understand at first, and he, with an honest simplicity, told [it] his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we [were] binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood

* The Jewish writers would render it, He was the son of the Elders, their disciple. The Greek paraphrase says, He was a wise and prudent child; showed signs of glory and goodness betimes; and excelled the rest in wisdom and understanding.

- 8 round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said unto him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.
- 9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made
- 10 obeisance to me. And he told [it] to his father, and to his brethren: and his father, *partly through ignorance, and partly in policy, to abate the hatred of his brethren,* rebuked him, and said unto him, What [is] this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come
- 11 to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying: *being thus doubled, and so very remarkable, it made a deep impression on his mind, and he laid it up in his heart.*
- 12 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem, *about twenty miles off.* And Israel said unto Joseph,
- 13 Do not thy brethren feed [the flock] in Shechem? *I fear lest some evil should come to them from the inhabitants, because of their murder of the Shechemites;* come, and I will send thee unto them, *to see how they are.* And he said unto him, Here
- 14 [am] I, *ready to obey your commands.* And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.
- 15 And a certain man found him, and, behold, [he was] wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What
- 16 seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I
- 17 pray thee, where they feed [their flocks.] And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.
- 18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.
- 19 And they said one to another, Behold this dreamer cometh.
- 20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, *that is digged to hold rain water,* and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what
- 21 will become of his dreams.* And Reuben heard [it,] and he, *to make some amends for the injury he had done his father, and to regain his favour,* delivered him out of their hands; and
- 22 said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, [but] cast him into this pit, that [is] in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

* It is a lamentable and surprising thing, that there should be such wretches in Jacob's family; and such treachery, ingratitude, cruelty, and inhumanity, among this good old patriarch's children.

- 23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, [his] coat
- 24 of many colours that [was] on him ; And they took him, and cast him into a pit ; *though, as we are told (ch. xlii. 21.) he besought them with great anguish of soul not to do it :* and the
- 25 pit [was] empty, [there was] no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread, *to feast on the provisions, which, it is probable, he brought them, while he was starving in the pit (see Amos vi. 6.) :* and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm, and myrrh, going to carry [it] down
- 26 to Egypt.* And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit [is it] if we slay our brother, *or suffer him to perish in the pit,*
- 27 *and conceal his blood ?* Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, *and thus make some money of him,* and let not our hand be upon him ; for he [is] our brother [and] our flesh.
- 28 And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen ; and they, *that is, Joseph's brethren,* drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver, *about forty shillings of our money :* and they brought Joseph into Egypt.
- 29 And Reuben, *who it seems was absent at the time this was done,* returned unto the pit, *probably to deliver Joseph out of it, and send him home :* and, behold, Joseph [was] not in the pit ; and he rent his clothes, *and thus expressed his grief and concern, because, being the eldest brother, his father would expect that he should have taken care of him ; and for this neglect would treat him more severely, on account of his former crime.*
- 30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child [is] *not in the land of the living ;* and I, whither shall I go ? *His brethren then told him the story, and he consented to the cheat intended to be put on his father.*
- 31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats,
- 32 and dipped the coat in the blood ; And they sent the coat of [many] colours, *probably first by a messenger, and then they themselves came,* and they brought [it] to their father ; and said, This have we found : know now whether it [be] thy son's coat or no ; *not our brother's, but thy son's, thy favourite's coat ?*
- 33 And he knew it, and said, [It is] my son's coat ; an evil beast hath devoured him ; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.
- 34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins,
- 35 and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters, *Dinah, and his sons' wives,* rose up to comfort him ; but he refused to be comforted ; and he said, For

* A caravan of Ishmaelites and Midianites used to travel together, for fear of robbers or wild beasts.

I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father* wept for him.

- 26 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, [and] captain, or *chief commander*, of the king's guard. Thus, as Stephen observes (*Acts vii. 9, 10.*) *God was with him and delivered him out of all his afflictions.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T is dangerous for parents to manifest too great partiality to any of their children. Jacob's fondness for Joseph caused him a great deal of grief, and exposed his son to imminent danger. Allowances ought to be made for merit; where there is any thing serious and pious, it ought to be cherished, encouraged, and rewarded: but this should be done prudently; for the spirit even of children lusteth to envy. The difference should not be too remarkable between one and another. This is one instance in which Paul's advice may be applied; *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.*

2. How hateful and dangerous a passion is envy! It had like to have cost this amiable youth his life, as well as his liberty, if God had not interposed. It led his brethren to a most deliberate and malicious design, that shocks human nature. What a diabolical spirit is this! and how careful should we be to guard against it. It destroys all the bonds of natural affection, and makes persons deaf to all pity and humanity. *Proverbs*, says Solomon, *is able to stand before envy?* When we see others more beloved and applauded than ourselves, more rich and healthful, easy and comfortable, let us guard our minds, check and suppress the first risings of an envious disposition, which tends to so much mischief; and ever remember, that envy is one of those wretched tempers which exclude from the kingdom of heaven.

3. Inordinate passions are their own punishment. Jacob's fondness for Joseph was a source of bitterness and anxiety: it was near twenty years after this before he heard of him. A mind which is not under the influence of strong passions, is likely to be most at ease. The nearer creature comforts are to us, the faster root they take in our hearts, and the removal of them, or the fear of that removal, is the more grievous. It is our duty, and will be our wisdom, to have relatives and other comforts, as though we had them not; that is, not to be ever fond of them, but expect trouble and changes. The greater our love, the greater will be our grief.

* That is, as some imagine, and I think very probable, thus Isaac, Jacob's father, wept for the loss of his grandson: he was alive at this time, and no doubt bore his part in the melancholy affliction of the family.

4. See how secretly the providence of God works to bring about its own purposes, and in how mysterious a manner ! This was the beginning of the whole scheme of the Jewish economy. Observe on how many circumstances it depended ; on Reuben's interposition ; on Judah's proposal ; on the merchants coming by at that time ; on his being sold into Egypt, to one of Pharaoh's officers ! In all this we see the finger of God. *There are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* This is a key to many circumstances in the course of our lives, which may seem trifling in themselves, but on which great and important events depend.

5. Much of our sorrow for our departed friends arises from ignorance and mistakes. Jacob's sorrow is an emblem of ours ; he saw the garment torn, and concluded that Joseph was destroyed. We see the body, which is but the soul's clothing, torn and breathless, and we conclude the soul is lost, at least we too often act as if we thought so ; but the rent of the body only serves to let out the soul. Thus, like Jacob, we often perplex ourselves with supposing things to be much worse than they are. If we could but be undeceived, if we did but know things right, we should act quite otherwise. We mourn our departed friends, because their bodies are torn and left behind, when, like Joseph, they are gone to reign, and to be ten thousand times happier than they could be with us. To give way to immoderate sorrow for our departed friends, is dishonourable to God and religion, and shows our ignorance or forgetfulness. So Paul in *1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.* *I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* Jacob's over affectionate love to Joseph, and his immoderate grief, when he supposed him dead, teach us, as the apostle advises, *to rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and to weep as though we wept not, and to use all our comforts so as not to overvalue or abuse them, since they are continually passing away.*

CHAP. XXXVIII.

*In the middle of Joseph's story we find here related some particulars of Judah's family : his marriage ; the death of his sons ; his incest with Tamar ; his confusion at its discovery ; and the birth of twin sons, in whom his family was built up.**

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, *having quarrelled with them about selling Joseph*, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name [was] Hirah ; *a Canaanite, of little religion, but perhaps*
- 2 *as much as himself.* And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name [was] Shuah ; and he took her to wife, *contrary to his father's consent, (ch. xxiv. 3.)* and
- 3 went in unto her. And she conceived, and bare a son ; and
- 4 he called his name Er. And she conceived again, and bare
- 5 a son ; and she called his name Onan. And she yet again conceived, and bare a son ; and called his name Shelah : and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.
- 6 And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name [was] Tamar ; *a tall, beautiful person, like a palm tree, as the*
- 7 *word signifies.* And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD : and the LORD slew him, *in some ex-*
- 8 *traordinary and remarkable manner.* And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, *accord-*
- 9 *ing to that levitical law, made afterward (Deut. xxv. 5.)* and raise up seed to thy brother ; *beget a child which may bear thy brother's name, and have his inheritance.* In this case the eldest child was looked upon as the brother's, all the rest would
- 10 be considered as his own. And Onan knew that the seed, the firstborn (Deut. xxv. 6.) should not be his : and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled [it] on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. *This was a wicked action, springing from an envious and obstinate temper ; and God was pleased severely to punish it.*
- 11 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD : wherefore he slew him also, *struck him dead in an awful manner.* Let selfpolluting sinners hear and fear, and do no more wickedly.
- 12 Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown : for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren [did.] And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's bouse.
- 13 And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died ; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheep-shearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.
- 14 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father in law goeth

* As this chapter interrupts the history of Joseph, the reading of it may be omitted in families.

14 up to Timnath to shear his sheep. And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which [is] by the way to Timnath ; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife. *Her intention probably was to catch Shelah, whom she expected Judah would bring with*

15 *him.* When Judah saw her, he thought her [to be] an harlot ; because she had covered her face. *So harlots were used to do, not having then learned to glory in their shame.* And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee ; (for he knew not that she [was] his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me,

17 that thou mayest come in unto me ? And he said, I will send [thee] a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give

18 [me] a pledge, till thou send [it ?] And he said, What pledge shall I give thee ? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, *perhaps a cloak or a girdle of small value,* and thy staff that [is] in thine hand. And he gave [it] her, and came

19 in unto her, and she conceived by him. And she arose, and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive [his] pledge

21 from the woman's hand : but he found her not. Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where [is] the harlot that [was] openly by the way side ? And they said, There was

22 no harlot in this [place.] And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her ; and also the men of the place said,

23 [that] there was no harlot in this [place.] And Judah said, Let her take [it] to her, lest we be shamed : behold, I sent

24 this kid, and thou hast not found her. And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot ; and also, behold, she [is] with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, *that she may be tried, and if found guilty, when she is delivered, let her be burned ; let her be put to death,*

25 *according to the law of God and of nations.* When she [was] brought forth, to be tried for her adultery (*for she was betrothed to Shelah and considered as his wife,*) she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man whose these [are, am] I with child : and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose [are] these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff. And Judah acknowledged [them,] and said, She hath been more righteous than I ; *she has more reason to accuse me, than I her ; since I have been the cause of her sin ; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more ; he was ashamed of his sin, and did not repeat it ; and probably was not married after this, as we do not read of any other children of his.*

27 And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold,
twins [were] in her womb ; *and she had hard labour, as a punishment for her sin.* And it came to pass, when she travailed
28 that [the one] put out [his] hand : and the midwife took and
bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, 'This came out
29 first, *and shall be considered as the firstborn.* And it came to
pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came
out : and she said, How hast thou broken forth ? [this]
breach [be] upon thee : therefore his name was called Phare-
30 rez, *that is, a breach.* And afterward came out his brother,
that had the scarlet thread upon his hand : and his name was
called Zarah, *he ariseth or cometh forth again.* Some commen-
tators have laboured to find an extraordinary mystery in the birth
of these children, as relating to the Jews and Gentiles ; but I
think without any solid foundation.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **G**OD is highly displeased with the sins of young people. Neither Er nor Onan could be much above sixteen, yet they were severely punished. Youth has no licence to act at random. Some sins are called tricks of youth, and therefore are looked upon as small matters, but they are not so in God's esteem. When men are capable of discerning good and evil, God expects that they act wisely, and he will punish them here or hereafter if they do not. He sometimes takes them away in his wrath, and thus makes them awful warnings to others. Therefore young men are exhorted to be sober minded, and so flee youthful lusts, which war against the estate and reputation, the body and soul.

2. How does lust besot the mind, and bring shame on those who indulge it ! What scandalous stories are these ! Such as Josephus, the Jewish historian, was ashamed to mention, as bringing a disgrace on the father of his nation. Lust robs a man of his bracelet and staff, his ornament and defence, and leaves men in a weak, infamous state. What a wretched figure does this patriarch make, when going in, as he supposed, to an harlot ! It should make us all careful to mortify the deeds of the body, and keep ourselves pure.

3. How many dread shame more than sin ; the tongues of men more than the eyes of God ! *Lest we be shamed,* has a greater influence with many, than *lest we be damned* ; so unaccountable is the folly of this world. But how unworthy is this of the character of one of God's people ! Seneca, an heathen, could say, ' Though all men should be ignorant of the evil I do, and I knew the gods would forgive me, yet for the filthiness there is in sin, I would not commit it.' Fear of shame may preserve from some sins, but the fear of God is the only preservative from all sin.

4. How ready are we to censure our own faults when we observe them in others ! Judah pronounced a very severe sentence on Tamar. Let us take heed that wherein we judge others, we do not at the same time condemn ourselves : our Lord's advice is, *First take the beam out of thine own eye, then thou wilt see clearly to take the mote out of thy brother's eye.*

CHAP. XXXIX.

We have before us a remarkable instance of Joseph's chastity and integrity, and his overcoming one of the most formidable temptations that ever youth was attacked with ; a deliverance, says one of the ancients, as astonishing and remarkable as that of the three children in the fiery furnace. We have in this chapter his advancement, his glorious conquest of a strong temptation ; his false accusation and imprisonment ; and God's gracious appearance for him

1 **A**N D Joseph was brought down to Egypt ; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard who attended the king's person when he went abroad, and who had the charge of the state prison, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither : into his family Joseph was taken, and God blessed him. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man ; God was with him, blessing and prospering all he took in hand : and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian, and applied himself patiently and faithfully to that low estate wherein

2 God's providence had placed him. And his master saw that the LORD [was] with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand ; which probably was not the case

3 before Joseph came into his family. And Joseph found grace in his sight, was no longer treated by him as a slave, and he served him, attended his person ; and, after some time, he made him overseer over his house, and all [that] he had he put into his hand, he became steward of his household, and superintended all his affairs. And it came to pass from the time [that] he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake ; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field ; every thing

4 succeeded the better for Joseph's having a hand in them. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand ; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat ; every thing was trusted to Joseph's management. Thus was the master happy in an excellent servant, and the servant happy in a

kind and friendly master. But in this changing state, the most pleasing situation may be rendered uncomfortable, yea, dangerous. And Joseph was [a] goodly [person,] and well favoured, a beautiful youth, about twenty seven years of age.

- 7 *And when Joseph was in these flourishing circumstances, an unexpected trouble came upon him, for it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph, and became a lewd tempter to him ; and, forgetting her sex, her duty, and station, having lost all principles of virtue and honour, with an impudent face she said to him, Lie with me. Who can hear such a proposal without indignation ! It is probable she had tried some other methods to allure him, before her passion rose so high ; but finding them disregarded, she became more urgent. Joseph was young and prosperous, and stood high in his master's favour : it would have been much for his interest to have obliged his mistress ; it was at his peril to refuse ; he had continued importunity and convenient seasons ;*
- 8 *But, by divine assistance he overcame this strong temptation and refused, and held fast his integrity ; nevertheless he showed so much respect to his mistress as to reason with, and did not fly in her face and reproach her : he suggests many arguments why he could not comply, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what [is] with me in the house, and he*
- 9 *hath committed all that he hath to my hand ; [There is] none greater in this house than I ; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou [art] his wife : how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ?*
- 10 *who has been so good to me, and who sees and knows all my secret thoughts and actions ; how can I do it ? He speaks of it as an impossible thing. One would have thought so much virtue would have abashed and confounded this abandoned seducer,*
- 11 *but she haunted him still. And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, [or] to be with her. He resolutely and wisely shunned her discourse and company, till, tired*
- 12 *with his refusal, she resolved to succeed or ruin him. And it came to pass about this time, that [Joseph] went into the house to do his business ; and [there was] none of the men of the house there within, being gone to a feast, as Joseph thus tells us. And, Joseph coming in to settle his accounts, she*

* He argues 1. from gratitude to his master ; He hath advanced me so much above my expectation, and showed me so much generosity, that I should be a monster of ingratitude if I was to abuse him in this matter. Shall I, a stranger and a slave, put infamy upon my master, and do him irreparable mischief ? 2. He argues from his fidelity ; My master knoweth not what is in the house, he hath committed all to me, except thyself, and shall I prove a traitor and deceive him ? Shall I be guilty of the basest treachery and unfaithfulness, by invading his bed, and breaking the sacred matrimonial tie ? But then comes the chief argument, 3. How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ? His virtue was founded on religion, and this made it steadfast and unmoveable. This interrogation speaks the greatest detestation of the vice to which he was solicited : How can I sin against my master ; against thee ; against my aged father and my brethren ; against my own body and soul ? But above all, How can I sin against God ?

- caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me : and he *thought it to no purpose to reason any more, and not being willing to struggle with her,* left his garment in her hand, and fled,
- 13 and got him out, *fled as for his life, for his soul.* And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her
- 14 hand, and was fled forth, *that her lust turned to rage, so* That she called unto the men of her house, *made an uproar, and forged a most notorious falsehood,* and spake unto them *when they came,* saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us, to abuse us, and so cause us to be disgraced ; he came
- 15 in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice : And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him
- 16 out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came
- 17 home. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us,
- 18 came in unto me to mock me : And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. *This story was very unlikely to be true ; her having his garment, rather showed that she solicited him, than he her ; had he attempted to force her, he might easily have secured his*
- 19 *garment.* And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me ; that his wrath was kind-
- 20 led. And Joseph's master took him, *perhaps without hearing his apology, or at least to save appearances and his wife's credit,* and put him into the prison, or *dungeon,* a place where the king's prisoners [were] bound : and he was there in the prison, *in irons, as the psalmist tells us, (Psalm cv. 18.)*
- 21 *' Whose feet they hurt with fetters ; he was laid in iron.'*
- 21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison, *that is, the under keeper, to whom he probably told this story.*
- 22 And the keeper of the prison, *being convinced of his innocence and integrity,* committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that [were] in the prison ; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer [of it,] *that is, it was done by his direction and order.*
- 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing [that was] under his hand ; because the LORD was with him, and [that] which he did, the LORD made [it] to prosper. *So true are Jacob's words (ch. xlix. 23, 24.) The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him : but his bow abode in strength ; and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW happy is it for a man to enjoy the blessing of God upon his affairs ! Joseph's brethren sold him ; and left him in great distress ; but the Lord was with him ; and no wonder then that he was a prosperous man. He was separated from his friends, but not deprived of the presence of God ; though removed from his earthly father, his heavenly father was near him still ; *the blessing of God came upon the head of him who was separated from his brethren.* Those who desire prosperity, should secure the favour of God, make him their father and friend, and carry with them, wherever they go, a sense of his presence and friendship, and do nothing to forfeit that favour. Then, as the psalmist says, *they shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water ; their leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever they do, it shall prosper.*

2. To have good servants is to be considered as an instance of the kind providence of God : and those who are so, should be esteemed and valued. God made Joseph a good servant, and gave him grace, or favour, in the eyes of his master ; and he advanced him, took him to be his own servant, and chief steward. It is a great satisfaction to masters and mistresses to have those about them in whose prudence and integrity they can confide. Potiphar trusted all to Joseph ; whereas masters in general are obliged to be the chief servants in a family, and the work often falls heaviest upon them. Good servants are a blessing to the family where they dwell, and families may sometimes be blessed for their sake. Potiphar was blessed for Joseph's sake, and Laban for Jacob's sake. Such therefore should be highly prized and esteemed, not only as servants, but as brethren in the Lord : all kindness and encouragement should be shown them, to reward their fidelity ; and though perhaps they may not be altogether so suitable in other respects, if they fear God, and are faithful to their trust, they should be esteemed very highly in love.

3. How infamous and wretched is that mind which is abandoned to the irregularity of passion ! What a wretched figure does this audacious woman make ! Her name is buried in oblivion and forgetfulness, but her character remains as a reproach to the family and nation to which she belonged. Her headstrong passions hurried her along to break through all the bonds of decency, modesty, and fidelity ; her conscience was scared and unimpressed. When this unclean spirit gets possession of human nature, it is hard to dispossess him. How careful therefore should men and women be to guard against the least approach to such sins, to check all unclean and sensual thoughts. How careful should they be to make a covenant with their eyes, and keep a rule over their own spirits, that they may not be, as this wretched creature was, like a city without any defence, acting a disa-

agreeable, shameful, scandalous part, and adding one degree of horrible wickedness to another. Let every one learn to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour ; neither using filthiness, or foolish talking, or jesting, which are not convenient. How suitable is the apostle's advice, *keep thyself pure* ; and how much need have we to pray, *Lord, create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us.*

4. The fear of God is the most excellent preservative from sin. The omniscience and universal government of God, made Joseph resist this violent temptation so boldly. He considered it not only as a sin against his master, but against God. Thus Nehemiah, speaking of the wickedness of his predecessors, adds, *So did not I, because of the fear of GOD.* The fear of men, or shame, or natural decency and modesty, may keep men and women from sin in some circumstances, and on some occasions ; but real religion is an universal preservative from sin ; it gives a divine sanction to social duties, and all the strictest branches of personal virtue. It is a good thing then, *that the heart be well established with grace*, which will keep us from those snares which are most artfully laid. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil ; and happy is he that feareth always.*

5. What an amiable and lovely character is this of Joseph, and how fit a model for young men to imitate. Paul commands Timothy to *flee youthful lusts*, and Titus, to *exhort young men to be sober minded.* Joseph was stripped of his coat, but not of his virtue ; he carried that along with him. Satan tried him by such a temptation as was peculiarly suitable to those whose blood is warm, and their constitution vigorous ; but he resisted him steadfast in the faith. He looked upon uncleanness, and especially adultery, as a most enormous crime ; he did not esteem it, as too many in these days affect to do, as a light matter, a trick of youth ; as a thing that by right should not have been a sin, as some have profanely talked ; but he was struck with horror at the thoughts of it, and chose rather to expose himself to the hatred and resentment of an imperious, lustful, revengeful woman, than sin against his master and his God. The example of some great men, and the generality of our modern plays, are eminently calculated to corrupt the minds of youth ; the debauchery of their heroes, and their men of resolution and bravery, have a wretched influence on young minds. There was every circumstance in Joseph's temptation, that could render the sin pleasant and profitable ; but, through divine grace, he overcame it. He is the only hero, who can resist temptation. *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not ; and in order to this, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus ; repel every temptation with this reply, How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God ?*

6. If we would avoid sin, we must keep out of the way of temptation. Joseph did so ; he kept out of the sight and com-

pany of his mistress, he would not sit with her, or be near her. This lovely youth might have argued and reasoned ever so long, but probably he would have been overcome if he had not avoided the tempter. Thus must we do, if we would be safe. So Solomon advises, *Go not near the door of her house*, the house of the strange woman, or harlot. Avoid every occasion of sin ; mind your own proper business ; for idleness is an inlet to this and every other sin. Do not stand parleying with temptation, but give it a short and sharp repulse ; *Get thee behind me, Satan*. He that parleys is half won. Get out of harm's way. To pray, *Lord, lead us not into temptation*, and yet to run into it, is an abominable mockery of God. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*.

7. How liable is innocence to be injured by false accusations ! Joseph seemed to be justly condemned, when for his eminent virtue he was cast into prison. It is easy for men to raise and spread a spiteful story, to ruin the reputation and comfort of the person injured, as long as he lives. What devilish malice must it be to charge persons in any circumstances, and especially persons of worth and eminence, with such vices as bring a wound, and a dishonour, and a reproach, which perhaps can never be wiped off. A malicious tongue is set on fire of hell ; the wisest and best of men have often been injured by it, and have had no remedy but an appeal to the heartsearching God. Those who are most clear and untainted, may yet be exposed to hard speeches and unjust reproaches. So Joseph was ; so Christ himself was ; but God will at length bring forth the righteousness of his servants as the noon day : and those who have reviled and slandered others, shall feel the most bitter remorse in this world probably, but certainly in another, when characters that have been unjustly aspersed shall be cleared up. Jesus, who bore the contradiction of sinners against himself, shall then plead the cause of his injured servants ; and to those who have been slandered and oppressed he shall give eternal rest.

8. How cheerfully may innocence repose itself on God, under all the injuries it suffers ! God distinguished Joseph by his favour and blessing, in the prison, as well as in Potiphar's house. From his having the favour of the keeper of the prison, one would think that Potiphar supposed it to be a suspicious affair, and therefore he was not so highly incensed against Joseph. Perhaps he knew something of his wife's character ; though for the sake of his own, as well as her's he still kept him in prison ; but God was with him there. *To the upright there ariseth light in darkness* and dungeons ; the gates of the prison could not shut out God's favour and blessing. He raised him up friends during his confinement, and made his bondage comfortable. So will God do for all his oppressed servants. This instance should encourage those who suffer wrongfully, to bear it patiently. *This*, says the

apostle Peter, is praiseworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endureth grief, suffering wrongfully. To conclude with the words of one of the Apocryphal writers : Joseph, that righteous man, was sold ; but wisdom, that is, the wise God, forsook him not, but delivered him from sin ; went down with him into the pit, and left him not in bonds, till he brought him the sceptre of the kingdom, and power against those that oppressed him : as for them that had accused him, he showed them to be liars, but gave unto him perpetual glory. Wisdom x. 13, 14.

CHAP. XL.

Joseph's story is continued, whom we left in prison ; and have here the imprisonment of two of Pharaoh's servants ; their dreams, and Joseph's interpretation of them ; and the accomplishment of Joseph's predictions concerning them.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass after these things, [that] the butler, or cupbearer, of the king of Egypt and [his] baker
- 2 had offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against two [of] his great officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. *What their crime was, is not mentioned ; some think a conspiracy to*
- 3 *take away the king's life by poison.* And he put them in ward in the house of Potiphar the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph [was] bound, *or had been bound ; for he was now at liberty, and made overseer of the*
- 4 *prisoners.* And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, *being told by the under keeper of his fidelity and care, and probably believing his innocence, though he still kept him in prison ; and he served them, that is, waited and attended upon them : and they continued a season in ward.*
- 5 And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, *that is, a dream which was significant of something to come, which did also come to pass, according to the interpretation given thereof ; (ch. xli. 13.)* the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which [were] bound in the prison.
- 6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they [were] sad ; *because they perceived the dream was sent from God to betoken something future, and they understood not the meaning of it.* And he asked Pharaoh's officers that [were] with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye [so] sadly today ?
- 7 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and [there is] no interpreter of it ; *there is no magician or sooth-*

- ayer that we can apply to in our present confinement. And Joseph said unto them, [Do] not interpretations of dreams [belong] to God? not to such persons as those? tell me [them], I pray you, for I fear and serve him, and doubt not but he will hear my prayers, and reveal this matter to me. Probably he had a strong impulse on his mind, which led him to say
- 9 so. And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said
 10 to him, In my dream, behold, a vine [was] before me; And in the vine [were] three branches: and it [was] as though it budded, [and] her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup [was] in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.
- 12 And Joseph said unto him, This [is] the interpretation of it: The three branches [are] three days, *that is, signify three*
 13 *days*: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, *that is, bring thee to trial, and at that time restore thee unto thy*
 14 *place*: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand. But after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. *Joseph, though patient in adversity, yet uses all good means to procure his liberty:*
- 15 For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon. *This modest and decent request, is admired by the critics as one of the finest passages of antiquity. The request is made in the strongest manner, with the tenderest motive, and has every thing in it that could affect a generous, grateful, and compassionate breast; and as the butler knew the misery of confinement, Joseph therefore hoped he would take pity upon him.*
- 16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also [was] in my dream, and, behold,
 17 [I had] three white baskets on my head: And in the uppermost basket [there was] of all manner of bake meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.
- 18 And Joseph answered and said, This [is] the interpretation thereof: The three baskets [are] *or signify* three days:
- 19 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, *shall bring thee to trial, take thy office from thee, and cut off thy head*, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.
- 20 And it came to pass the third day, [which was] Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants; *he reckoned with them, brought them to*

- 91 *trial before all his officers. And finding him innocent, he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again ; and he gave*
 92 *the cup into Pharaoh's hand : But he hanged the chief baker, whom he found guilty ; as Joseph had interpreted to them.*
 88 - *Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but courtier like forgot him, neglected him and his desire : but God remembered, and at length delivered him.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **O**BERVE here how gradually the providence of God wrought for Joseph ; in bringing those men to prison, in filling their heads with significant dreams, and so ordering it, that the butler should tell his dream first. Had the baker began, the interpretation would have been so dismal, that the butler would probably have concealed his. In these circumstances we may see, and should own, the hand of God, in which are the hearts of all men, and who can turn them as he pleases.

2. We may learn humanity to sufferers, from the conduct of Joseph to these prisoners. They were put under his care, and he treated them with sympathy and kindness. He did not think the crimes, with which they were severally charged, to be a sufficient ground for using them severely and roughly ; he ministered unto them, and compassionately inquired about their grief. It is the duty of all to be *pitiful and courteous ; to be kindly affectioned one toward another*, even to those who have been guilty of great offences. It is a part of christian compassion to inquire into the cause of the sorrow of others, that we may do kind services for them ; at least speak comfortable words to them ; thus *are we to bear one another's burdens.*

3. Let us humbly refer to God all those gifts with which we are favoured. *Do not interpretations belong to God ? Joseph was desirous that God might have the glory of this gift of foreseeing things to come. All things come of him, ordinary as well as extraordinary, and he should have the praise.* The reasoning of the apostle will hold good with regard to every advantage and accomplishment ; *Who maketh thee to differ, and what is there that thou hast not received ? Wherefore then shouldst thou boast ?*

4. Let us be careful not to indulge ourselves in passionate complaints of injuries received, v. 15. Joseph made no complaint of his mistress, any more than of the cruelty of his brethren ; but only asserted his own innocence, which was necessary for his deliverance. It is the *glory of a man to pass by a transgression.* When men are obliged to vindicate themselves, they think they have a right to speak evil of others, and represent those who have injured them in the blackest light. But we see, in the conduct of Joseph, how much more agreeable and fitting it is to prove our innocence, without upbraiding others. *Let us learn to forgive and forget, forbearing one another, and*

forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

5. We learn fidelity in delivering the most awful messages, when a man's welfare is concerned. Joseph told the baker plainly his terrible doom, and perhaps instructed him in the knowledge of the true God, and the nature of religion, and urged him to improve the little time he had left. This is a good hint to ministers, to speak the Lord's word faithfully, and deliver their message with seriousness and fidelity ; especially to those who are near the grave. Because they see them in an oppressed state, and for fear of disobliging their friends, and the like, they are often too negligent in this instance ; but it is a cruel kindness, and they are accessory to the blood and ruin of their souls, if they neglect to give them fair and faithful warning.

6. Learn to avoid ingratitude, which appears so odious in the butler, who *forgot Joseph*. Joseph had served him in prison, sympathized with him, brought him good tidings, and done him many kind offices ; yet he was unmindful of his sufferings, and his kindness : when advanced in Pharaoh's court, and surrounded with all the delicacies and pomp of it, he forgot his fellow sufferer. It is probably in allusion to this, that the prophet, speaking of the obduracy and insensibility of the people, says, *Amos vi. 6. They drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief of ointments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* Let us abhor this character, and not think it strange if we should meet with such treatment. Especially let us abhor ingratitude to God, who hath done so much for us, and laid us under such strong obligations to remember and serve him. Let us ever be mindful of his goodness ; study, by holy and obedient lives, to show forth his praise, who hath sent his own Son from heaven, to *proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to bring our feet into a large place.*

CHAP. XLI.

It is the observation of an inspired writer, that ' many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.' This is illustrated in the history of Joseph, particularly in this chapter ; where are related Pharaoh's remarkable dreams ; Joseph's interpretation of them ; his advancement to a place of great trust and power, and his prudent management of it.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass at the end of two full years after the butler's restoration, that Pharaoh dreamed, and, behold, he stood by the river Nile ; on the rise of which in the spring, the fruitfulness of the next year depended, there being
2 no rain in that country. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine, and fat fleshed ; and they

- 3 fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and lean fleshed ; and stood by the [other] kine upon the brink of the river, *feeding on the rushes that grew on its banks, and not in meadows as the former did. This also shows that the river did not then overflow its banks, and consequently there must be a famine in*
- 4 the land. And the ill favoured and lean fleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.
- 5 And he slept, and dreamed the second time : and, behold, seven
- 6 ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung
- 7 up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, [it was] a dream ; *a divine, supernatural dream, sent immediately by God, and intimated that both the grazing and arable land would*
- 8 *then fail.* And it came to pass in the morning, that his spirit was troubled ; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men, *or philosophers,* thereof : and Pharaoh told them his dream ; but [there was] none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. *It is a wonder they did not find something to satisfy his mind ; but God restrained their spirits.*
- 9 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day, *my ingratitude to Joseph and*
- 10 *breach of promise :* Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, [both]
- 11 me, and the chief baker : And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he ; we dreamed each man according to the in-
- 12 terpretation of his dream. (*See ch. xl. 5.*) And [there was] there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard ; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams ; to each man according to his dream he did in-
- 13 terpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was ; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.
- 14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon, *that is, out of the prison house, a part being put for the whole of it. Here he had let his hair grow, and wore the habit of mourning ; but it was not decent to appear before the king in this manner, and therefore he*
- 15 Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and [there is] none that can interpret it : and I have heard say of thee, [that] thou canst understand a dream to
- 16 interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, [It is] not in me, *I cannot do it of myself : the interpretation of dreams belongs to God, who shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace ; such an answer as may portend happiness, prosperity, and all good to thee, and may quiet thy troubled mind. This he wished,*

- and perhaps forebaw. No doubt Joseph's mind was greatly impressed with these things : perhaps he now began to see the meaning of his own dreams, and how Providence was gradually working for their accomplishment.* And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river : And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat fleshed and well favoured : and they fed in a meadow : And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and lean fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness : And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the one stalk, full and good : And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them ; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good : And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, [and] blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them : And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears : and I told [this] unto the magicians ; but [there was] none that could declare [it] to me.
- And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh [is] one in signification, that is, both dreams signify the same thing : God hath showed Pharaoh what he [is] about to do. The seven good kine [are] seven years ; and the seven good ears [are] seven years : the dream [is] one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them [are] seven years ; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind, shall be seven years of famine. This [is] the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh : What God [is] about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt : And there shall arise after them seven years of famine ; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt ; *there shall be no remains of former plenty ; their present misery shall make them forget it ;* and the famine shall consume the land ; And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following ; for it [shall be] very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice ; [it is] because the thing [is] established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass ; *it is both certain and near. Upon this Joseph, under the influence of that Spirit by which he had interpreted the dream, gives this wise and prudent advice ;* Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do [this,] and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.*

* If it be asked, Why no more than a fifth part ? It may be replied, That a tenth was the usual tax of the king ; this year it might be double the quantity of former years, because of the great plenty. He might also purchase a fifth part beside the tax ; and all this, in a plentiful year, would be equal to a whole crop in a common season.

- 35 And let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, according to Pharaoh's appointment, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. *Having truly interpreted the butler's dream, and his interpretation of this being so natural and likely, greatly affected the king's mind, and the minds of his courtiers.*
- 38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find [such an one] as this [is,] a man in whom the Spirit of God [is?] *such prudence as God by his Spirit hath bestowed on this man in such a singular manner?* And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, *given thee this extraordinary gift of foreseeing and foretelling things to come, and of giving such prudent advice for the future,* [there is] none so discreet and wise as thou [art:] Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain, *an ensign of honour,* about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: *the Hebrew word signifies, the king's father or tender father, kind saviour of the people; or perhaps it was a common phrase, as 'God save the king,' is with us: and he made him [ruler] over all the land of Egypt.*
- 44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I [am] Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt; *that is, as sure as I am king, so sure without thy advice and authority shall no man do any thing in point of government.*
- 45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; *most commentators say it means a revealer of secrets, but Jerome says, it means the saviour of the country. It is common to this day for eastern kings to give names to their favourites, significans of some service they have done, or some honour conferred upon them.** And he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest, or prince, of On; *a city afterward called Heliopolis, where was a famous temple dedicated to the sun.* And Joseph went out over [all] the land of Egypt.†

* See De la Vallé's Travels to the East.

† A late infamous writer endeavours to sully the character of Joseph, and to prove him ambitious, tyrannical, and oppressive; and says, that Pharaoh divested himself of all regal authority, and put the whole military force of the kingdom into Joseph's hands, and gave him the nomination to all places of power and trust. But these things are evidently false, for Pharaoh says in v. 40, *In the throne will I be greater than thou;* he rode only in the second chariot. The assertion, that he had the military forces under his command, is founded on a marginal reading, v. 40. *As thy word shall all my people be armed:* but in

- 46 And Joseph [was] thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of
 47 Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the
 48 seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, *the fifth part (v. 34.) of all manner of eatable things*, and laid up the food in the cities : the food of the field, which [was] round about
 49 every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering *the measures* ; for [it was] without number.
- 50 And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah
 51 priest, or prince, of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh, *that is, forgetting* : For God, [said he,] hath made me forget all my toil, *hath expelled all sorrowful remembrance of it by my present comfort and glory*, and all my father's house, *that is, all my sufferings there from*
 52 *my brethren*. And the name of the second called he Ephraim; *that is, fruitful* : For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.
- 53 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land
 54 of Egypt, were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said : and the dearth was in all lands ; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.
- 55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, or *pinched with famine*, the people cried to Pharaoh, *as to their king and common father*, for bread : and Pharaoh said unto all the
 56 Egyptians, Go unto Joseph ; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth : and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians ;
 57 and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy [corn ;] because that the famine was [so] sore in all lands. *No doubt this business was managed with great prudence and compassion, corn was sold at a reasonable price, and the people were not oppressed, though the king was enriched.*

most other places (some critics say in all) it signifies *to kiss*, or pay civil respect, as in Psalm ii. 12. *kiss the Son, &c.* And that he was empowered to nominate whom he pleased to places of trust, is equally groundless, for he had not power to raise his brethren when they came, or to send for his father, without Pharaoh's command. See chap. xlv. 19.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see here how easily God can trouble and confound the spirits of men, even of princes. Pharaoh's dreams troubled him ; so did Nebuchadnezzar's and Belshazzar's, of which we read in the Book of Daniel. How easily can he scare men with dreams and visions on their bed ! As we have reason to believe that this extraordinary method of communicating convictions and knowledge is ceased, let us not be anxious about these things, but keep close to God's written word. I do not say, that God never communicates admonitions this way, but we have no reason to expect it. *In the multitude of dreams, says Solomon, Eccles. v. 7. there are divers vanities ; but fear thou God.*

2. See how easily God can deliver his people, and turn their captivity into triumph and joy. This Joseph little expected, after a delay of two full years. Deliverances are often nearest when least expected ; and, when most unlikely, they are most seasonable and welcome. 'Behold,' says Bp. HALL, 'one hour has changed his fetters, into a chain of gold ; his prison garments, into robes of fine linen ; his stocks, into a chariot, and his gaol, into a palace ; Potiphar's slave, to be his master's lord ; and the noise of his chains, into the acclamation of the people, *bow the knee.*' *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of all their tribulations ;* and those who suffer for well doing, and commit the keeping of their souls to him, shall at length be advanced to all the dignity and glory of heavenly beings.

3. See the influence of God on the spirits of men, in Joseph thus interpreting the dreams, and in Pharaoh and his courtiers falling in with his advice. God inclines men to do those things that answer the schemes and purposes of his providence. Let us reverence and adore him, who *orders all things according to the purposes of his own will, who is wonderful in council, and excellent in working, or in contrivances.*

4. Let us learn, from such interpositions of Providence as these, to *commit our ways to the Lord*, and trust in him for deliverance, till the happy time shall come, when he will make us forget all our sorrows. They were significant names which Joseph gave his children. It is God who sends us such comforts, as make us forget our sorrows, and remember our troubles no more. The afflictions of his people are designed to make them fruitful ; and they should bear with patience, what he lays on them, and *wait all the days of their appointed time, till their change comes.* God's providence may be working for us, though we cannot perceive it ; and *those light afflictions which are but for a moment, may be working out for us a far more exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.*

. CHAP. XLII.

Jacob sends his sons into Egypt to buy corn ; their treatment by their brother there, and return to their father with an account of it. It may appear strange that Jacob never heard of his sons' advancement, and that Joseph never sent to his father, or paid him a visit when he went through the land, and was within forty or fifty miles of the place where he lived ; but undoubtedly the hand of Providence was in it ; and Joseph, who had the gift from God of interpreting dreams, might so far understand his own, as to wait till his brethren bowed themselves before him ; and if Jacob and his family heard of such an extraordinary person in Pharaoh's court, they would not have known his new name.

1 **N**OW when Jacob saw, or heard from some of his neighbours, who had been there, that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another ? sit still, and do nothing in this time of distress ? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt : get you down thither, and buy for us from thence ; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob's dearest child by his beloved wife Rachel, Jacob sent not with his brethren ; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him : And the sons of Israel came to buy [corn] among those that came : for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

2 And Joseph [was] the governor, or sultan over the land, [and] he [it was] that, by his officers, sold to all the people of the land : but the names of all the purchasers might be brought to him, especially foreigners, that he might keep a watchful eye over them : and Joseph's brethren came and bowed down themselves before him [with] their faces to the earth, and thus fulfilled his dream. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them ; and he said unto them, Whence come ye ? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.* And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him, being much altered in his countenance, stature, and apparel, and speaking to them by an interpreter. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, so as to observe their accomplishment, and said unto them, Ye [are] spies ; this he speaks only by way of trial and discovery, as if he had said, One may well suspect you to be spies, if you cannot clear your-

* He deals thus with them, that he might bring them to make a full relation of the present state of their family ; to humble them the better with the remembrance of their former sin ; to enhance their joy when the truth of things should be discovered ; and the more fully to manifest the accomplishment of his dreams, when, being under his power, they should in an humble manner see to him for their liberty.

- actes ; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come, where*
 10 *the country lies most open and exposed to danger, And they*
said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants
 11 *come. We [are] all one man's sons; and it is not likely one man*
would expose all his sons at once to so dangerous an employ-
 12 *ment ; we [are] true [men,] thy servants are no spies. And*
he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land
ye are come, to observe its weakness, and where you may best
 13 *attack it. And they said, Thy servants [are] twelve breth-*
ren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan ; and, behold,
the youngest [is] this day with our father, and one [is] not.
 14 *And Joseph said unto them, That [is it] that I spake unto*
you, saying, Ye [are] spies ; this confirms my saying : it is
not likely a father should send ten sons on such an errand, and
 15 *keep only one at home. Hereby ye shall be proved : By the*
life of Pharaoh, as sure as Pharaoh lives, ye shall not go forth
 16 *hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one*
of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept
in prison, that your words may be proved, whether [there be
any] truth in you : or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye
[are] spies. They might have brought any young man, and
called him their brother : and it is probable Joseph supposed
 17 *they had really made away with him. And he put them all*
together into ward three days ; that their own sin might be
 18 *brought to remembrance. And Joseph said unto them the*
third day, This do, and live ; [for] I fear God, and would not
 19 *do an inhuman action : If ye [be] true [men,] let one of your*
brethren be bound in the house of your prison : go ye, carry
 20 *corn for the famine of your houses : But bring your youngest*
brother unto me ; so shall your words be verified, and ye
shall not die. And they did so, or promised and resolved
to do so.
 21 *And they said one to another, while in Joseph's presence,*
(little thinking that he understood the Hebrew language,) We
[are] verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw
the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would
not hear ; therefore is this distress come upon us. We sold
our brother Joseph for a slave, and now we ourselves are
captives ; we would not hear his cry, and now our cry
will not be heard ; this brought their sin to their remem-
 22 *brance. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I*
not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child ; and
ye would not hear ? (this shows that they sold him un-
known to Reuben :) therefore, behold, also his blood is re-
 23 *quired ; we shall now be punished for his death. And they*
knew not that Joseph understood [them ;] for he spake unto
them by an interpreter. The interpreter might now be with-
 24 *drawn, or attending only to one of them, while Joseph heard the*
discourse of the rest. And he turned himself about from

them, and wept ; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes ; *who by this seems to have had the greatest hand in Joseph's trouble ; or, being by nature bold and fierce, Joseph thought he might be the most likely to hinder Benjamin from coming.*

25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them
26 provision for the way : and thus did he unto them. And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence,
27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money ; for, behold, it [was] in
28 his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored ; and, lo, [it is] even in my sack : and their heart failed [them,] and they were afraid ; *they thought it could not be designed as a kindness, but must be intended as a foundation for a quarrel ; however they acknowledge the hand and justice of God in it,* saying one to another, What [is] this [that] 'God hath done unto us ? *Is it not a just punishment for our sin against our brother ?*

29 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befel unto them ; saying,
30 The man, [who is] the lord or governor of the land, spake
31 roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We [are] true [men ;] we are no spies :
32 We [be] twelve brethren, sons of our father ; one [is] not, and the youngest [is] this day with our father in the land of
33 Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye [are] true [men ;] leave one of
your brethren [here] with me, and take [food for] the famine
34 of your households, and be gone : And bring your youngest brother unto me : then shall I know that ye [are] no spies, [but] that ye [are] true [men : so] will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land.

35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money [was] in his sack : and when [both] they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid : *their fear returned with more violence, having more time to think of the matter ; and their wise, experienced father suggesting many things to them, which might deeply affect both himself and them : he probably imagined they had behaved themselves ill and brought the money away craftily.*

36 And Jacob their father seemed to think they only were in fault, and said unto them, Me have ye bereaved [of my children : *] Joseph [is] not, and Simeon [is] not, and ye will take Benjamin [away :] all these things are against me ; *this renewed stroke upon my former sorrows is very grievous, and greatly*

* * Of my children, is not in the original, and spoils the beauty of the sentence. The expression is elliptical ; *Me have ye bereaved ;* then perhaps followed a sigh or groan.

- 37 *affects me.* And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, or two of my sons, (for he had four, ch. xlv. 9.) if I bring him not to thee : deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. *This was a rash and foolish proposal ; but it was only intended to express his full belief that the man would release Simeon, and to persuade him*
 38 *to let Benjamin go, which for the present he refuses.* And he said, My son shall not go down with you ; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone of Rachel's children : if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HE fear of God, wherever it prevails, will promote a sense of humanity, v. 18. Joseph durst do no wrong ; no, nor deal unkindly with those who had injured him, because he feared God ; the almighty, allknowing, and merciful God. Though Joseph was a great man, he was sensible there was one infinitely greater than he, to whom he was accountable, and whom he ought to reverence. This is the best principle for social duties to be discharged by ; reverence for God will make us deal honestly and tenderly ; it will guard us against all rigour and severity. It was a strange and absurd speech of a great man, that he was ' the friend of God, but the enemy of mankind.' The best way to incline us to do justly, and love mercy is, to walk humbly with God, and be in his fear all the day long.

2. See the force of conscience : it brought to the mind of Joseph's brethren, those crimes that were committed twenty years before ; their conscience immediately struck upon this ; they remembered their faults that day. Conscience brings old sins to a new reckoning ; though it seems to be asleep, it records faithfully, and will be a fearful accuser another day. Let us guard against sin, for it may be very bitter many months, yea many years, after it is committed and forgotten. Reuben had this satisfaction that he did not consent to this wicked act ; it will be comfortable amidst the calamities we may suffer with others to think we had no hand in the guilt. *Herein then, let us exercise ourselves, to maintain a conscience void of offence toward God and man.*

3. See the usefulness of affliction in bringing our sins to remembrance. These men perhaps never thought much of Joseph before, nor were much concerned about what became of him ; but now they think of his case, with deep sorrow and repentance. God will write bitter things against us, to bring our sin to remembrance, and humble us for it. Afflictions, in this view, are great mercies, and it is God's common method of dealing with men : see Job xxxvi. 8—10. *And if they be bound in*

fetters, and he holden in cords of affliction; then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions, that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commendeth that they return from iniquity. Let us, therefore, patiently bear God's rebukes, and consider wherefore he contendeth with us; and resolve that wherein we have done iniquity, we will do so no more.

4. How ready are we to draw rash conclusions, as Jacob did, who said, *All these things are against me*, when all went for him, and working together for his good. We are ready to conclude, when we lose our wealth or fame, our health or friends, all this is against us; but God intends it for our good. To judge by passion, or affection, is the way to judge wrong: Jacob's grief darkened his mind, and overwhelmed his faith. We are in great danger of forming a wrong judgment of the divine dispensations, especially of those which are a source of grief and sorrow: Jacob was happily disappointed. Let us learn to *judge nothing before the time*, but patiently wait till the mystery of Providence is opened; and then we shall see the truth of Paul's observation, that *all things work together for good to them that love God*, and are the called according to his purpose.

CHAP. XLIII.

Jacob's sons are forced to go a second time into Egypt; Benjamin goes with them; their conversation with Joseph's steward; and the kind entertainment they received from their brother.

- 1 **A**ND the famine [was] sore in the land; a still greater
- 2 scarcity prevailed. And it came to pass, when they
- 3 had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food, just enough for the present, hoping next year to have a plentiful
- 4 crop. And Judah, who probably had more interest with his father than Reuben or Levi, spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my
- 5 face, except your brother [be] with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food;
- 6 But if thou wilt not send [him,] we will not go down, we cannot go, without breach of our promise, nor without danger: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except
- 7 your brother [be] with you. And Israel said, wherefore dealt ye [so] ill with me, [as] to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state and of our kindred, saying, [Is] your father yet alive? have ye [another] brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words; gave him such answers as these questions required; could we certainly know that he

- would say, Bring your brother down ? And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me (so called, because he was the youngest, though now above thirty years old.) and we will arise and go ; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, [and] also our little ones. I will be surety for him ; of my hand shalt thou require him ; I will do all I can to secure him, and rather suffer any thing than lose him : If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever, and lie under thy displeasure : For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time. And their father Israel, when he saw there was no help, but he must risk an uncertain danger, or be accessory to the certain ruin of his family, consented, and said unto them, If [it must be] so now, do this ; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts,* and almonds ; having found in the case of Esau, that a gift pacifieth anger :
- 12 And take double money in your hand, as corn may now be grown dearer ; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry [it] again in your hand ; peradventure it [was] an oversight, either in you, or the receiver of the money, and it must therefore be restored : Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man : And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved [of my children,] I am bereaved ; God's will be done ; I commit the issue wholly to him.
- 15 And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin ; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph, at the place where he gave audience, or sold corn. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said privately to the ruler of his house, Bring [these] men home, and slay, and make ready ; for [these] men shall dine with me at noon. In those hot countries it was necessary to dress their meat immediately after it was killed.
- 17 And the man did as Joseph bade ; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house ; and they said, because of the money that was returned in the sacks at the first time are we brought in ; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen and our assets. Conscience accused them, and they thought they should be taken up for cheats, and made slaves of ; therefore they began eagerly to make their apology.
- 19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and 20 they communed with him at the door of the house. And

* Most probably the Pistachio nuts, which were reckoned a great dainty, and were peculiar to Judea and Syria.

- said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy
 21 food : And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we
 opened our sacks, and, behold, [every] man's money [was]
 in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight : and we
 22 have brought it again in our hand. And other money have
 we brought down in our hands to buy food ; we cannot tell who
 put our money in our sacks. *To this the steward made a wise*
 23 *and religious answer ;* And he said, Peace [be] to you, fear
 not : your God and the God of your father, hath given you
 treasure in your sacks ; *this shows that Joseph had instructed*
him in the knowledge of God : I had your money, and no harm
shall come to you on that account. And as a further proof of his
 24 kind design, he, by Joseph's order, brought Simeon out unto
 them. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house,
 and gave [them] water, and they washed their feet ; and he
 gave their asses provender.
 25 And they made ready the present against Joseph came at
 26 noon : for they heard that they should eat bread there. And
 when Joseph came home, they brought him the present
 which [was] in their hand into the house, and bowed them-
 selves to him to the earth.
 27 And he asked them of [their] welfare, and said, [Is] your
 father well, the old man of whom ye spake ? [Is] he yet
 28 alive ? And they answered, Thy servant our father [is] in
 good health, he [is] yet alive. And they bowed down their
 heads, and made obeisance. *Thus Joseph's dream was repeated-*
 29 *ly accomplished.* And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother
 Benjamin, his mother's son, *he observed him more narrowly*
than at first, and said, [Is] this your younger brother, of whom
 ye spake unto me ? And he said, God be gracious unto thee,
 my son. *A kind and tender appellation, by which an elder or su-*
 30 *perior addressed a younger or inferior.* And Joseph made
 haste ; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother : and he
 sought [where] to weep ; and he entered into [his] chamber,
 and wept there.
 31 And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained him-
 32 self, and said, Set on bread. And they set on a table for him
 by himself, *as viceroy,* and for them by themselves, and for
 the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves : be-
 cause the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews ;
 for that [is] an abomination unto the Egyptians, *because the*
Hebrews did eat sheep and goats, which the Egyptians worship-
 33 *ped, (Exodus viii. 26.)* And they sat before him, the first-
 born according to his birthright, and the youngest according
 to his youth : and the men marvelled one at another, *that he,*
who had before used them so roughly, should now treat them so
kindly, and place them according to their several ages. This
was an extraordinary circumstance, and might well illustrate

what he afterward said to them about his divining, if that were the sense of these words. And he took [and sent] messes unto them from before him, dishes from his own table ; but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. Joseph intended hereby to show Benjamin peculiar affection, and see whether his brethren would envy him on the occasion. And they drank, and were merry with him. So kind and generous a reception, made them for a while forget their hardships and sorrows.*

REFLECTIONS

1. **W**E hence see the extreme force of necessity, and what reason we have to be thankful for the comfortable provisions of life. Jacob's was a rich and wealthy family, but sore famine made him travel far for provisions. The good man put off the evil day, and protracted the time of sending Benjamin as long as possible ; but the famine being heavy, he was forced at last to comply. *Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* Let us bless God that this is not our case ; we are fed with the finest of the wheat ; God spreads our table, and fills our cup ; he giveth us all things richly to enjoy ; and has not broke our staff of bread. Let us then serve him cheerfully in the use of all the good things which he giveth us.

2. We see in the conduct of Jacob an example of the strictest honesty. He sends his sons with the money again, v. 12. he does not boast of the bargain ; is not glad of the mistake in his favour ; but willing to make restitution ; he would not take advantage of the hurry of selling the corn, to escape without paying : a mistake is no payment. Let us learn from his example to restore what comes to us by the mistakes of our brethren, and in every instance deal, not only honestly, but honourably, for God sees it. To take advantage of the ignorance of our brethren, or to keep what does not by right belong to us, though we did not come by it fraudulently, are each contrary to strict honesty, and to the rule of *doing to others as we would have them do to us.*

3. We learn to depend on God for the success of the best concerted measures. Jacob says, *Take double money, and a present, and your brother ;* and then adds, *God Almighty give you mercy before the man.* He knew that God has access to the hearts of men, and can easily turn them, as he did Esau's ; he therefore looked up to him, and followed his sons with many an earnest prayer. Prudence and piety should thus always go together ; *in all thy ways acknowledge God, and he will direct thy paths.* When we

* A favourite guest was always distinguished by one of the largest and best. Thus Homer mentions setting a chair before a stranger, in token of respect.

want favour and mercy from men, let our eyes be up toward the Lord, for he can influence them which way he pleaseth.

4. Let us resign ourselves and our dearest comforts to God's disposal. Israel's, in v. 14. was not the language of passion or despair, but of sober reason, and humble submission to God ; like Esther, *If I perish, I perish* ; I must submit to the providence of God ; not dispute his superior will, but compose myself under it. Thus, whatever afflictions come, let us be resigned to them, and bear them patiently. When God takes away our comforts, let our language be, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his sight.*

5. See how suspicious guilt makes men : no sooner were Joseph's brethren brought to his house, than they suspected some ill design, and that he was seeking an occasion of mischief against them, or to roll himself upon them, as the original is ; to employ his power and authority to crush them. What an uneasy thing is it to have fear when no man pursueth ! *The wicked fear where no fear is* ; every thing appears gloomy and dark ; but *to the upright there ariseth light in darkness.* The best preservative from groundless fear and unreasonable suspicion, is to keep a good conscience.

6. We see what a great advantage it is to serve in a religious family. Joseph's steward, by acquaintance with his master, was brought to an acquaintance with the true God, the God of the Hebrews. Masters should teach their servants the knowledge of God, and lead them to fear and reverence him. Servants should choose such families where they may have opportunities of knowing God ; and those who are favoured with such opportunities, should carefully improve them ; mention the name of God with the highest reverence ; and never be ashamed to own their acquaintance with him, and their obligations to him.

7. How necessary is it that the greatest of men should learn and practise the government of their passions, if they desire to appear either with honour or comfort. Joseph prudently withdrew when his affections began to warm, and refrained himself. The heart that is a slave to passion, and has never yet obtained the government of itself, is in a wretched condition. Let us learn to keep our hearts with all diligence, that we may be calm and sedate, and not hurried away by torrents of passion ; for *he that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.* Prov. xxv. 28.

CHAP. XLIV.

Joseph's brethren were merry with him, and little expected to be in those circumstances in which this chapter finds them ; but it was his policy, in order to detain and try them.

- 1 **A**ND he commanded the steward of his house, saying,
 2 Fill the men's sacks [with] food, as much as they can
 3 carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And
 4 put my cup, *the large, valuable cup which I drink out of, even*
the silver cup that is embossed, or brought, as the original sig-
nifies, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn mon-
 5 *ey. And he did according to the word that Joseph had*
spoken. Hereby Joseph meant to try his brethren's affec-
tion to Benjamin, and to their father, and whether they would
 6 *assist him in his extremity. As soon as the morning was*
 7 *light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. [And]*
when they were gone out of the city, [and] not [yet] far off,
 8 *Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men ; and*
 9 *when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore*
 10 *have ye rewarded evil for good ? He charges them with ingrati-*
 11 *tude and then with theft : [Is] not this cup which ye have tak-*
 12 *en, [it] in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he*
 13 *divineth ? or, as in the margin of our bibles, maketh trial ; he*
 14 *left this cup in your way to try your honesty ; ye have done*
 15 *evil in so doing ; it was wicked to steal it, and foolish to at-*
 16 *tempt it, because my master would soon miss it, and easily con-*
 17 *jecture where it was gone.*
 18 And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same
 19 words. And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord
 20 these words ? God forbid that thy servants should do accord-
 21 ing to this thing : *thus vindicating themselves with eagerness,*
 22 *and then urging the former proof of their honesty ; Behold, the*
 23 *money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought*
 24 *again unto thee out of the land of Canaan : how then should*
 25 *we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold ? With whom-*
 26 *soever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we*
 27 *also will be my lord's bondmen. This was honestly, but not*
 28 *prudently said. And he said, Now also [let] it [be] accord-*
 29 *ing unto your words : he with whom it is found shall be my*
 30 *servant ; and ye shall be blameless, free from punishment,*
 31 *and at liberty to return home unmolested. Then they speedily*
 32 *took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened*
 33 *every man his sack. And he searched [and] began at the*
 34 *eldest, and left at the youngest : and the cup was found in*
 35 *Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laden*
 36 *every man his ass, and returned to the city ; thinking that*
 37 *Joseph, being a man of generosity, and humanity, would for-*

give Benjamin, when he saw another brother willing to become his slave.

- 14 And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house ; for he [was] yet there : and they fell before him on the ground.
- 15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed [is] this that ye have done ? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine, *or, make trial ? that I, who foretold this famine, could*
- 16 *not easily find out such a cheat ?* And Judah, *beginning abruptly,* said, What shall we say unto my lord ? what shall we speak ? or how shall we clear ourselves ? *And, after a pause, added,* God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants, *of one of us, though the rest be free :* behold, we [are] my lord's servants, both we, and [he] also with whom the cup is found ; *we are all in thy hands, to do with us as seemeth good*
- 17 *in thy sight.* And he said, God forbid that I should do so : [but] the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant ; and as for you, get ye up in peace unto your father, *without any prejudice to your persons or goods. He might say this, to try Benjamin's temper, and how he would bear such an affliction, as well as his brethren's affection to him and to his father.*
- 18 Then Judah, *being particularly concerned because he had undertaken for Benjamin,* came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant : for thou [art] even as Pharaoh, *in his room and stead, whose dis-*
- 19 *pleasure therefore is equally to be feared.* My lord asked his
- 20 servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother ? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one, *the youngest ;* and his brother is dead, *torn to pieces,* and he alone is left of his mother Rachel, and his father loveth him. *Joseph would perceive by this account what a lie they had told their father concerning him,*
- 21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him, *or, show him favour.*
- 22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father : for [if] he should leave his father, [his father] would die.
- 23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.
- 24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my
- 25 father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father
- 26 said, Go again, [and] buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down : if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down : for we may not see the man's face,
- 27 except our youngest brother [be] with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that Rachel my wife bare
- 28 me two [sons.] And the one went out from me, and I said,
- 29 Surely he is torn in pieces ; and I saw him not since : And

- if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall
 30 bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now
 therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad
 [be] not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's
 life, *that his life and his all depends upon the welfare of the lad:*
 31 It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad [is] not
 [with us,] that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down
 the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the
 32 grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my
 father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear
 33 the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee,
 let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord;
 34 and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go
 up to my father, and the lad [be] not with me? lest perad-
 venture I see the evil that shall come on my father. *Thus*
Judah urges the grief it would be to the old man, offers to be
Joseph's slave, instead of Benjamin, as he could do him more
service, and pleads the insupportable distress that his aged
father would suffer, if Benjamin did not return with his breth-
*ren.**

REFLECTIONS.

1. **G**OD sometimes brings his people into the greatest dis-
 tress, when deliverance is nearest. So here: they had
 given up all, thought there was no hope; but the time of
 favour was come. In the mount of difficulty God is seen. See
 how good it is to *hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God.*
2. It is good to acknowledge our iniquity, when the afflicting
 hand of God is upon us; as Joseph's brethren did, v. 16. Af-
 flictions are designed to bring our sin to remembrance, and en-
 gage us to consider it, and be humble for it; *the fruit of afflic-*
tion is to take away sin. Let us acknowledge our guilt in such
 circumstances; and pray, like Job, *Show me wherefore thou con-*
tendest with me; wherein I have done iniquity, I will do so no more.
3. See here an example of filial tenderness. Judah chose
 rather to be a slave all his days, than go home, and see the evil
 that would come upon his aged father. Children should learn
 to love their parents, to be tender of their comforts, and do nothing
 to grieve them. Those are very wicked children who are a grief
 to their father and heaviness to their mother: they can never
 sufficiently repay their tenderness and care toward them, and

* This address must undoubtedly have affected a stranger, more especially Joseph, and produced that effect of which the next chapter gives an account. It is impossible to read it without perceiving it full of the most natural eloquence, and extremely well adapted to excite Joseph's compassion. It is remarkable he does not acknowledge the crime, for that would have reflected on Benjamin; nor does he deny it, which would have reflected on Joseph's justice; but he labours to move his pity, and that in language that no art or impostor could have imitated, but seems plainly suggested by that Spirit which giveth speech and wisdom to men.

therefore should labour to make their cares easy, and their burdens light ; and especially should give them the high satisfaction of seeing them walking in truth.

4. We should not despair of reformation, even in those whose characters are the worst. Judah had been a scandal to Jacob's family ; but here he seems greatly reformed, full of humility, tenderness, and compassion, and a regard to his promise. Young men oftentimes grow wiser as they grow older ; and God makes use of afflictions to humble and reform them. Let us not give up all hopes even of the worst, but labour to make them better ; and God may, in his good time, add his blessing to our constant endeavours.

5. We see how happy it is to maintain a circumspect regard to truth. This gave them so much confidence in what they said to the steward, and in their plea before Joseph. If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence both toward God and man. *Integrity and uprightness, if maintained, will preserve us ; let us therefore labour to secure these for our rejoicing ; and in simplicity and godly sincerity to have our conversation in the world.*

CHAP. XLV.

Solomon observes, Prov. xxv. 25. 'As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' This observation is illustrated by the tidings that Jacob and his sons received of Joseph. The last chapter closed with Judah's speech : in this we have the effect of it ; it touched Joseph's heart, and put an end to all the sufferings of his brethren.

- 1 **T**HEN Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him ; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren : that so he might conceal his brethren's fault, and not render himself contemptible to the Egyptians by his excessive tears, and familiar and affectionate converse with his brethren. And he wept aloud : and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard ; some who were near overheard him and carried the intelligence to 3 Pharaoh's court. And Joseph, unable to contain himself any longer, said unto his brethren, I [am] Joseph. This must strike them with astonishment. 'Wonder, doubt, reverence, joy, fear, hope, and guilt, (says Bp. Hall) all must strike them at once.' Joseph adds, Doth my father yet live ? can I believe the account you have given me ? and his brethren could not answer him ; they stood before him with paleness and silence, looking on him and each other ; for they were troubled, or ter-

4 *rised, at his presence, through a sense of guilt, fear of punish-*
ment, and the strangeness of the event. And Joseph, to raise
 their courage, said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I
 pray you, *with theriffulness and confidence.* And they came
 near. And he said, I [am] Joseph your brother, whom ye
 sold into Egypt. *I mention this not to upbraid you, but to as-*
sure you that I am he, and that I still own the relation, notwith-
standing my dignity and your wickedness. He then takes the
 kindest method to remove their fears, by leading them to
 observe the wisdom and goodness of Providence in this event.
 5 Now therefore be not grieved; nor angry with yourselves,
 that ye sold me hither : for God did send me before you to
 preserve life ; *both your lives and the lives of all the people in*
 6 *this and the neighbouring countries.* For these two years
 [hath] the famine [been] in the land : and yet [there are]
 five years, in the which [there shall] neither [be] earing nor
 7 *harvest, ploughing; nor tillage.* And God sent me before you
 to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your
 lives by a great deliverance, *brought about by a wonderful and*
 8 *extraordinary work of providence.* So now [it was] not so
 much you [that] sent me hither, but God, *who turned it to*
 good : and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of
 all his house, and ruler throughout all the land of Egypt ;
his principal counsellor of state, to guide his affairs with a fa-
therly care, and to have the authority, respect and power of a
 9 *father with him.* Haste ye and go up to my father, and say
 unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me
 10 lord of all Egypt : come down unto me, tarry not : And thou
 shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near un-
 to me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and
 11 thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast : * And there
 will I nourish thee ; for yet [there are] five years of famine ;
 lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to
 12 poverty. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my
 brother Benjamin, that [it is] my mouth that speaketh unto
 13 you, *in your own language, and not by an interpreter.* And
 ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all
 that ye have seen ; and ye shall haste and bring down my
 father hither.
 14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept ;
 15 and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his
 brethren, and wept upon them : and after that his brethren
 talked with him *freely and familiarly ; being encouraged by his*
kindness, they acknowledged their guilt, and told him what had
happened since he was absent from the family.

* Goshen lay near to Canaan, on the northeast part of Egypt. It was a rich land, good
 for feeding cattle, a proper distance from the court, where they would not be so likely to be
 corrupted, and might more easily return when the famine was ended.

- 16 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come : and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. *He was a generous prince, and glad of an opportunity to express his affection for so wise and pious a*
- 17 *minister, by showing respect to his family.* And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye ; lade your
- 18 beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan ; And take your father and your households, and come unto me : and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat
- 19 the fat of the land, *the choicest produce of it.* Now thou art commanded; this do ye ; take you waggons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your
- 20 father, and come. Also regard not your stuff at home ; for the good of all the land of Egypt [is] yours.
- 21 And the children of Israel did so : and Joseph gave them waggons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and
- 22 gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment, *two or three upper garments, new and handsome, that they might make a good appearance ;* but to Benjamin he gave three hundred [pieces] of silver, *about thirty seven pounds of our money,* and five changes of raiment.
- 23 And to his father he sent after this [manner :] *money, and change of raiment, and provisions for his journey, namely, ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.*
- 24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed : and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way, *about your dealing with me ; as I forgive you, so do ye to one another.*
- 25 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of
- 26 Canaan unto Jacob their father, And told him, saying, Joseph [is] yet alive, and he [is] governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not ; *he was quite overcome between hope, and doubt, and fear, and excessive*
- 27 *joy.* And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them : and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. *To see Simeon and Benjamin return, with a stock of provisions, made it a day of great joy to the good old man ; especially when he heard that Joseph, whom he thought had been*
- 28 *dead twenty years, was alive and governor of Egypt.* And Israel said, [It is] enough ; Joseph my son [is] yet alive : I will go and see him before I die. *I have lived long enough, and shall be happy enough if I live to see him but once again ; I shall then be willing to die whenever God pleases.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW amiable do generosity and forgiveness appear ! Had we heard of Joseph putting any of his brethren to death, or severely upbraiding them with their conduct, it would have spoiled the pleasure which the story of his exaltation gives us : but he kindly forgave them ; and in this he was a type of Christ, who forgave those that betrayed and murdered him. The best way of revenging an injury, is to use the offender as well as we can, and put him out of countenance by our kindness ; this is true greatness of spirit. The shame which this generosity brought upon them, was a sufficient punishment. Let us act thus, for so the gospel directs ; *If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; overcome evil with good. Forgive men their trespasses, and ye may hope that God will forgive you your trespasses.*

2. How unsearchable are the dispensations of Providence, in turning evil into good, and overruling even the sins of his creatures, for the good of his people, and the benefit of the world. Thus he did in the case of Herod and Pilate, as well as in the instance before us. There is in Providence a wheel within a wheel ; and, however mysterious, all is directed by infinite wisdom and goodness ; all is wisely conducted to a merciful end. Who would have thought, if they had seen Joseph in the pit, that it was he who should deliver Egypt and Israel ! Who, that had seen Jacob's grief when he saw the bloody coat, would have thought that it should be exchanged for transports of joy ! God is indeed *wonderful in council, and excellent in contrivances.* Let us own and adore his wisdom and grace, when we see them thus manifested ; and learn not to be rash in our judgment of things, but wait the issue. We shall often discover the wisdom and goodness of God in various instances now ; and hereafter, all the mystery shall be cleared up, and we shall find, that *all his ways are mercy and truth to them that fear him.*

3. How careful should we be to maintain mutual peace ! Joseph's advice was proper for his brethren, and for all of us : *See that ye fall not out by the way.* The arguments that should have influenced them, are applicable to us : we are brethren by nature, friendship, and religion ; belong to the same family of God's Israel ; we are going to our father's house ; in our way we are exposed to many enemies and dangers ; if we go in peace, we shall find the way secure and pleasant ; if not, we shall bring a reproach on our profession, and become the scorn of our enemies. Beside, we are all guilty, therefore all to blame, and have no reason to accuse one another. *O how pleasant a thing is it, for brethren to dwell together in unity !* Let us cultivate peace, and recommend it to others. Let us avoid the beginning of contention, and labour to make up differences as soon as possible ; as

the brethren of Christ, against whom we have rebelled, and by and through whom we hope to be forgiven. Let us *love one another, as he hath loved us* ; and *hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*.

4. How willing should the true christian be to go to his heavenly father's house ! Jacob was glad to hear that Joseph was alive, and governor of Egypt, and said, *It is enough, I will surely go and see him before I die*. He knew he should have a most kind reception, and all good things there. Thus let us long to be above, in that better country, where our dearest friends dwell ; where every good thing is to be had. We have many attractions to draw us there ; *regard not the stuff* that must be left behind ; the good of the land is before us. While here, *let us not seek great things for ourselves*, and use what we have, as not abusing it. The good of all the heavenly country is ours ; let us therefore sit loose to earthly things, and be willing to leave them. Did Jacob rejoice to go out of the land of promise, to a foreign strange land, for Joseph's sake ? How glad then should we be, to leave this strange land, to go to the heavenly Canaan, to a glorious inheritance in that better and lightsome Goshen, which is full of *all durable riches*, and *divine delights* ! To dwell with all our best friends, and Jesus, our best beloved, and be forever with each other and the Lord ! The holy soul may, with humble resignation, say, Why are the chariots, that are sent to fetch me, so long in coming ? why tarry the wheels of his chariots ?

CHAP. XLVI.

The apostle says, concerning the patriarchs, that they were pilgrims and strangers ; they were driven from place to place, and had no continuing city. This was remarkably the case with Jacob. We have here an account of his journey to Egypt, and his interview with his beloved son Joseph.

- 1 **A**ND Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, *thirty two miles from Hebron, and, as it had been a place of devotion for Abraham and Isaac, there he also offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac : he was thankful for God's kindness to Isaac, and to himself, and sought his protection and blessing on his journey to see Joseph.*
- 2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, *in a dream*, and said, Jacob, Jacob ; *repeating the name as a token of affection, and a note of attention.* And he said, Here [am]
- 3 I. And he said, I [am] God, the God of thy father ; fear not to go down into Egypt ;* for I will there make of thee a

* Jacob had many fears ; he was an old man, it was a long journey ; Isaac was forbidden to go there in the time of famine ; it was a kind of forsaking the holy land, and he was fearful of idolatry, and what the consequences might prove to his children and posterity.

great nation ; *though thou hast now but seventy souls belonging to thee, thy seed shall soon become as the stars of heaven for multitude* : I will go down with thee into Egypt ; and I will also surely bring thee up [again ;] *that is, thy bones, or rather, in thy posterity* ; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes ; *he shall outlive thee, and close thine eyes, as the last office of respect and friendship.*

5 And Jacob rose up from Beersheba, *and went cheerfully on his journey* : and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the waggons which 6 Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him : *bringing these things with them, that they might not be chargeable, and that none might reproach them with coming empty* : 7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

8 And these [are] the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, *most of whom we afterward read of, as heads of large families or tribes* ; Jacob and his sons : Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. And the sons of Reuben ; Hanoch, and 9 Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. And the sons of Simeon ; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, *of whom we never read any more*, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaan- 10 itish woman. And the sons of Levi : Gershon, Kohath, *the grandfather of Moses and Aaron*, and Merari. And the sons 11 of Judah ; Er and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah : but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul. *Pharez was very young, not above fifteen, when he went into Egypt ; perhaps these sons* 12 *were born afterward.* And the sons of Issachar ; Tola, *who was so fruitful, that in the days of David (1 Chron. vii. 2.) twenty two thousand six hundred valiant men were descended* 13 *from him*, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron. And the sons 14 of Zebulun ; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. These [be] the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah : all the souls of his sons and his daughters [were] thirty and three : *counting Jacob himself for one, and excluding Er and Onan who were dead, as Leah herself also was.* 15 And the sons of Gad ; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ez- 16 bon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. And the sons of Asher ; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their 17 sister : and the sons of Beriah ; Heber, and Malchiel. These [are] the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, [even] sixteen souls. 18 The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife ; Joseph and Benjamin. 19 And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh 20

- and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah
 21 priest, or prince, of On, bare unto him. And the sons of Benjamin [were] Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppm, and Huppm, and Ard.
 22 These [are] the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob ;
 23 all the souls [were] fourteen. And the sons of Dan ; Hus-
 24 him. And the sons of Naphtali ; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Je-
 25 zer, and Shillem. These [are] the sons of Bilhah ; which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these
 26 unto Jacob ; all the souls [were] seven. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, beside Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls [were] threescore and six ; *they were so many, excluding Jacob their common parent, and Joseph and his two sons, who were there before ; which*
 27 *four being included, make up the number of seventy.* And the sons of Joseph, which were borne him in Egypt, [were] two souls : all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, [were] threescore and ten.*
 28 And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen, *to meet him in a convenient place there ;* and
 29 they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph showed great respect to his father, and honoured him before all the people, and made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him, *as subjects do before a prince ;* and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while ; *this filled the good old man with*
 30 *joy and triumph.* And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou [art] yet alive.† *Since Joseph is alive and happy, all my wishes seem accomplished at once, and I am willing to die when God pleases. Nevertheless God spared him seventeen years after this. Joseph then proceeds to direct his father and brethren, how to behave before Pharaoh.*
 31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which [were] in the land of
 32 Canaan, are come unto me ; And the men [are] shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle ; and they have brought
 33 their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say,
 34 What [is] your occupation ? That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we [and] also our father's : that ye may dwell in the

* Stephen, in Acts vii. says they were seventy five souls. The difference may be thus accounted for ; Moses only mentions Jacob's immediate descendants, and not his son's wives, without which they were not so many ; that is, eleven brethren and a sister, fifty-two grand children, and the eleven wives of the brethren, made seventy five.

† The great Ali Bey, governor of Egypt, who died but a very few years ago, was in some respects a second Joseph. See *Savary's Letters on Egypt*. Vol. II. Let. 41.

land of Goshen, a place fit for your occupation, and at a distance from Pharaoh and his court ; for every shepherd [is] an abomination unto the Egyptians, especially the Israelitish shepherds ; because they lived by selling those cattle for slaughter which the Egyptians held sacred ; particularly the ox and the cow, which the Egyptians worshipped as emblems of Osiris and Isis.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us acknowledge God in all our journeys and removes. The patriarchs walked with God ; so Jacob did in this important affair. The heathen never set out on a journey, without offering sacrifices to their deities. It is good in all our ways to acknowledge God, to beg his protection and blessing ; it is that which maketh men rich and prosperous. A horse, or any carriage, is but a vain thing to trust to for safety. Let us have our eyes ever toward the Lord ; he can make our journey safe and successful. It is an old saying, that ' prayer and provender hinder no man.'

2. Let the thought which comforted Jacob, when going down to Egypt, comfort us when going down to the grave. v. 4. We may go with fear and trembling, but we have God's promise to rest upon, that he will not suffer his servants to perish in the grave ; but will surely bring us up again. Let us rejoice in this thought, and be willing to go where God would have us, since he will go with us. Yea, says David, *though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me.*

3. How comfortable will be the interview of good men in heaven ! It was agreeable to Jacob to see Joseph again ; what congratulations and joy were there on this occasion ! But how much more excellent will the meeting of parents and children, and friends be, in that better world ! There will be no weeping, even for joy, all will be tranquillity and peace, harmony and eternal friendship. What an happy meeting will that be ! An heathen philosopher could say, ' Let us make haste to our heavenly country ; there are our fathers, and there are all our friends.' Should not the christian then say so ; bless God for the prospect of meeting them there, and cultivate sincere affection and friendship one toward another, that we may relish the heavenly country ?

4. It is a great instance of friendship, to keep those that we love out of the way of temptation. Joseph was desirous that his brethren should abide in their calling, and remain in Goshen ; he did not wish to prefer them at court, to put them in places of trust and power, and raise them above the station in which they were brought up, and for which they were best qualified : but to

keep them to the innocent life of shepherds, that they might not be corrupted by the vices and idolatry of the Egyptian court : that they might not forget Canaan, but be desirous of returning to it, and keep together while they were absent from it. Parents will do right and well to choose such settlements in life for their children, where they will be most free from temptation, and those occupations in which they will be in least danger of being corrupted : if those are not so profitable, yet they are much to be preferred by all, except those who think this world better than the other. Let us learn to watch over one another, as Joseph did over his brethren ; and labour to keep all around us, especially our relations, from those stations and circumstances which would be injurious to their virtue, and make them forget their heavenly country. Let us thus watch over others as well as ourselves, and pray also that we *enter not into temptation.*

CHAP. XLVII.

It is promised to good men, in Psalm xxxvii. 19. 'That in the days of famine they shall be satisfied ;' this was the case here. Joseph presents his father and brethren to Pharaoh ; they are provided for, while the famine greatly prevails. We have an account of Joseph's prudent management at this time ; and his promise to his father concerning his funeral.

1 **T**HEN Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan ; and, behold, they [are] in the land of Goshen. *Though prime minister, he came to know Pharaoh's pleasure.*
 2 And he took some of his brethren, [even] five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. *Some say the meanest of them, lest Pharaoh should have employed them at court, or in the army.*
 3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What [is] your occupation ? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants [are] shepherds, both we, [and] also our fathers ; *our ancestors have always been used to this employment.* They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come, *during the famine ;* for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks ; for the famine [is] sore in the land of Canaan : now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

4 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee : The land of Egypt [is] before thee ; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell ; in the land of Goshen let them dwell : and if thou knowest [any] men of activity among them, then make

them rulers over my cattle. *This was the highest preferment that their business, and their resolution of continuing in it would permit.*

- 7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh ; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh, *saluted him, praying for his welfare, and giving him thanks for his bounty.* And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old [art] thou ? *In the original,*
 9 *how many are the days of the years of thy life ?* And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage, *of my wandering life,* [are] an hundred and thirty years : few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, *full of labour and toil, trouble and vexation, more than my fathers had,* and I have not attained unto the days of the years of the life
 10 of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.* And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh ; *took his leave, commending him to God.*
- 11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.
- 12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to [their] families.
- 13 And [there was] no bread in all the land ; for the famine [was] very sore, so that the land of Egypt and [all] the land
 14 of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought : and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's
 15 house. And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread : for why should we die in thy presence ?
 16 for the money faileth. And Joseph said, Give your cattle ;
 17 and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph : and Joseph gave them bread [in exchange] for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses ; and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year, *which was the*
 18 *sixth year of the famine.* When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year of their great extremity, *and the seventh year of the famine,* and said unto him, We will not hide [it] from my lord, how that our money is spent ; my lord also hath our herds of cattle ; there is not aught left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands :
 19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our

* Abraham lived one hundred and seventy five years, Isaac one hundred and eighty. Jacob had reason indeed to say, his days were few and evil ; he had calamities in abundance, in Reuben, and Simeon, and Levi ; in Judah and Dinah ; in Er and Onan ; Benjamin and Joseph ; what with the wickedness of some, and the misfortunes of others, his was a most afflicted family, and it is a wonder his heart was not broken. Surely the title of *The God of Jacob*, must have in it, principally, a view to a future state !

- land? (*the land is said to die, when it becomes desolate for want of tillage;*) buy us and our land for bread, and we and our lands will be servants unto Pharaoh : and give [us] seed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate.*
- 20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh : for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine
- 21 prevailed over them : so the land became Pharaoh's. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from [one] end of the borders of Egypt even to the [other] end thereof, *to the nearest cities where there was corn laid up ; which was an act*
- 22 *of prudence, compassion, and generosity.* Only the land of the priests, or *princes*, bought he not ; for the priests had a portion [assigned them] of Pharaoh, *a decree of Pharaoh that it should be so*, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them : wherefore they sold not their lands. *They were*
- princes, counsellors, and chief magistrates, as well as priests, and had a settled stipend from the crown.*
- 23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh : lo, [here is] seed
- 24 for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth [part] unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. *He dealt mercifully with*
- 25 *them, yet faithfully for his lord.*† And they said, Thou hast saved our lives : let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants, *his farmers and tenants.*
- 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, [that] Pharaoh should have the fifth [part ;] except the land of the priests, or *princes*, only, [which] became not Pharaoh's.‡
- 27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen ; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly, *according to the promise in chap. xli. 3.*
- 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years : so the days of the years of his life, or the whole age of Jacob, was

* Some have wondered they did not mutiny before this time ; but garrisons in the cities, and guards over the granaries, might prevent it.

† Joseph hath been reflected upon as acting a base part in buying the land, and enslaving the people ; but Joseph only acted as the minister of Pharaoh, and by his direction ; he could not give the corn away ; it was reasonable the crown should have some advantage ; only a fifth part was laid up by the king's orders ; particular persons might store up great quantities for themselves : if they used it too freely, or sold it to strangers for an extravagant price, they only were to blame ; they knew how long the famine was to last, and were fairly forewarned. It was great kindness in Joseph to take their cattle, or they would have perished ; and as to their lands, they were but tenants to the crown before this, as they were under an arbitrary government ; and, whatever we may think, they acknowledged it as a great kindness. See Chandler's Answer to Morgan.

‡ Thus he gave them their lands again, only reserved a fifth part of the produce for Pharaoh ; he laid on the land a tax of four shillings in the pound. They were thus exempted from arbitrary impositions, and secured in the full possession of their lands, on paying a reasonable tax, as much as we in Britain are at this day.

- 29 an hundred forty and seven years. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die : and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, *as a testimony of subjection and obedience*, and deal kindly and truly with me, *show me*
- 30 *true kindness* ; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt : But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place, *in token of my assurance that God in due time will bring back my posterity, and settle them in Canaan, and as a sign of my expectation and desire of the heavenly inheritance, whereof Canaan is a type*. And
- 31 he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel, *who probably was now sitting up in his bed, or on the side of it*, bowed himself upon the bed's head, *or upon the top of his staff, and worshipped God with thankfulness for his promises, and for this present mercy*.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T is an instructive view of human life which this patriarch gives us : *we are strangers and travellers* ; are not at home. To this the apostle refers, *Heb. xi. 13*. All his life was a pilgrimage, as well as the time since he left Egypt. So is our life ; our stay is short ; we are going to another state and world, and we have many inconveniences in our journey. Let us consider life in this view, and not act as if we were to continue here always, nor expect too much in the way. Let us often think of changing our habitations, bless God for what he hath done for us hitherto, and rejoice that *there remaineth a rest for the people of God* hereafter.

2. Let christians show kindness at home. Joseph is a good example of filial piety ; he was tender of his aged father, nourished him, sware to him that he would do as he desired him, and was very kind to all his brethren. Children, learn hence, *to honour your father and mother* ; do not forsake them when they are infirm and old ; love your brethren, and be ready to do all the good you can for them. Thus you will imitate Joseph, and likewise the blessed Jesus ; and at last have a place with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of your heavenly Father.

3. See what a terrible thing famine is, and let it teach us to be thankful for our daily bread. *Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life* ; his money, his cattle, his land ; he will part with all, even liberty itself, to save life. Let us be thankful this is not our case, that we are not reduced to this extremity. *God gives us all things richly to enjoy*. Let us improve our money, our cattle, our land, for that God who feeds

and clothes us, and blesses us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Let us rejoice, that we live under such a government, where our liberties and properties are secure ; and employ all our mercies for him, to whose care and goodness we owe them.

CHAP. XLVIII.

Joseph visiteth his father ; Jacob repeateth the promise ; and prophesieth their return to Canaan.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass after these things, that some [one] told Joseph, a messenger brought him tidings, saying, Behold, thy father [is] sick : and Joseph hastened to see him ; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, that they might hear his dying advice, and share in his blessing.
- 2 And [one] told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee : and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed : the hope of seeing Joseph and his sons revived him, and gave him fresh spirits.
- 3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people ; and will give this land to thy seed after thee [for] an everlasting possession. Thus reciting God's appearances for him, and promises to him.
- 4 And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt [are] mine, I own and adopt them as if they were mine ; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine ; they shall be particular tribes, and have an equal share of my present estate and future inheritance, with their brethren.
- 5 And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, [and] shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance : or, if thou hast any more children hereafter, they shall be counted as the children of Ephraim or Manasseh, and belong to one of those tribes, and not be heads of tribes themselves.
- 6 And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet [there was] but a little way to come unto Ephrath : and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath ; the same [is] Bethlehem : as if he had said, And now, my son, this reminds me of Rachel, thy dear mother, who died immediately after the promise of God to multiply my seed, and yet I see it fulfilled in the children God hath given to thee.
- 7 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who [are] these ? And Joseph said unto his father, They [are] my sons, whom God hath given me in this [place.] And he

- said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.* Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, [so that] he could not see. And he brought them near unto him ; and he kissed them, and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face : and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed ; *he hath outdone all my expectations.*
- 12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, *removed them from the embraces of his father, and set them orderly before him, to receive his blessing,* and he bowed himself with his face to the earth, *in reverence and thankfulness for the honour and affection shown to him and his.*
- 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought [them] near unto him.
- 14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid [it] upon Ephraim's head, who [was] the younger, *and yet should have the preeminence,* and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, *guiding his hands wittingly, prudently, or by divine direction ;* for Manasseh [was] the firstborn. And he blessed Joseph *in his children,* and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, *or behave themselves in a holy and acceptable manner,* the God which fed me all my life long
- 16 unto this day, *ever since I had a being,* The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads ; and let my name be named on them, *let them be called the children of Jacob, or Israel, that they may remember the country and family to which they belong,* and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac ; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.
- 17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, *because of his great affection for Manasseh his eldest son :* and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's
- 18 head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father : for this [is] the firstborn ; put thy right hand upon his
- 19 head. And his father refused, and said, I know [it.] my son, I know [it :] *these two holy prophets differed in judgment, not about the substance, but the circumstance of the blessing ; they disagreed about the ceremony only : and Jacob said, He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great : but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations, greater in number of posterity, and power, and dignity ; for of him came Joshua the conqueror of Canaan, and Jeroboam king of Israel ; wherefore that kingdom is frequently called by the name of Ephraim.*
- 20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless ;

* Paul says, Heb. xi. 21. *By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, with a paternal, patriarchal, and prophetic blessing, in the name and by the spirit of God ; praying for, and foretelling those blessings which God would confer upon them.*

when the Israelites bless or wish prosperity one to another, they shall take thee for an example or pattern, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manassch : and set Ephraim before Manassch.

- 21 And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die : but God shall be with you, and bring you again-unto the land of your fathers,
 22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow ; *I do now prophetically give, and God will really and actually give, to thy son Ephraim, or his posterity, that parcel of land which I bought of Hamor, (ch. xxxiii. 19.) for though the whole land was given to me and my posterity, yet this was mine by a special civil right, which being seized upon by the inhabitants of the land after I had bought it, I drove them out of it again.**

REFLECTIONS.

1. **A**GED and dying saints should thankfully commemorate the goodness of God to them : they should enter into particulars, and keep a catalogue of the most remarkable events ; as Jacob, David, and many others did. Aged christians should bear testimony to the truth and goodness of the Lord, to the pleasures of religion, and the comfort of God's ways ; and take occasion from thence to encourage others to walk in them ; thus *showing God's strength to this generation, and his power and glory to those who may come after them.*

2. How desirous should christian parents be to put their children in the way of God's blessing, and engage the prayers of eminent saints for them ! Jacob's prayers and blessing were worth more to the sons of Joseph, than all the wealth and power that he could bestow upon them in the land of Egypt. What passed on this occasion made a lasting impression on the minds of these youths : *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Young persons, in the present degenerate day, have need of all possible helps and encouragements in the way of religion. The prayers and instructions of christian friends and ministers, and especially the blessing of God, which is necessary to make young persons sober and virtuous, should be highly valued and carefully sought. Let us look on those as our best friends, who do any thing to make our children wise and good.

3. We see that the blessing of God is not bestowed according to the natural affection of parents and friends. God's gifts differ

* This afterward became the inheritance of Joseph, (*Josh. xxiv. 32.*) It is mentioned in the New Testament (*John iv. 3.*) as a parcel of ground which Jacob gave. Here Christ conversed with the woman of Samaria. There is a fine close in the neighbourhood of Shechem to this day, which *Maunderell* supposes to be the same which is here said to have been given to Joseph.

from ours ; he sometimes highly favours and distinguishes those, whom we think are most unlikely, and for whom we are least desirous of his favours. He does not act by the order of nature ; he sees farther than we do, and acts accordingly. There are many instances in which the younger is preferred to the elder ; for his gifts and grace are free.

4. When our friends are taken away, the presence of the living God is indeed comfortable ; and never more so than then. *He will never leave nor forsake us* ; he can make up all our losses. Though others should depart, and leave us alone ; if God be with us, we need not fear ; he can do for us whatever our best friends could, yea, and infinitely more than they could do ; his presence and blessing can attend us in those circumstances, in which they could not possibly help or comfort us : and ere long, if we are faithful, *he will take us to himself*, bring us to the land where our pious fathers are gone. Let us, therefore, strengthen and encourage ourselves in the Lord our God, from henceforth, and for ever. *Amen.*

CHAP. XLIX. 1—18.

Cyrus said, 'That the souls of men at the point of death became prophetic.' This ancient opinion never was universally true ; yet Jacob in this chapter prophesies in a most sublime and lofty style, when nature was sinking and dying. The words of dying parents generally leave a strong impression on the mind. Having received blessings from his father, Jacob now divides them among his children.

- 1 **A**ND Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you [that] which shall befall you in the last days ; *what shall happen to you and your*
- 2 *posterity in future times.* Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob ; and hearken unto Israel your father.
- 3 Reuben, thou [art] my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, *begotten in the prime and vigour of my days* ; the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power ; *it was thy due to have had the precedence both in dignity and*
- 4 *power ; but thou hast forfeited it, and art now Unstable as water, without selfgovernment, a man of no resolution ; thou shalt not excel, never come to any degree of eminence, either in number, valour, or extraordinary achievements ; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed ; then defiledst thou [it :] then Jacob, as with indignation at the fact, turns his speech from Reuben to his brethren, and shows how just cause there was to pronounce this sentence against him, and says, He went up to*

my couch, this my firstborn son scandalously defiled his father's bed ; he shall not excel. And so it came to pass ; there never was any eminent person of that tribe ; they were oppressed by their enemies, and never made any figure.

- 5 Simeon and Levi [are] brethren ; not only by nature, but likewise in manners ; and also confederates in the same wicked design, instruments of cruelty, or cruel weapons, [are in] their habitations, their bloody swords still remain to bear witness against them. O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; or, thou camest not into their secret ; I protest with my dying breath, I knew nothing of it, neither in word or thought consented to it ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united, let not my honour or good name be bound up with theirs, whose wickedness I abhor ; for in their anger they slew a man, that is, Shechem, and in their selfwill, not in a sudden passion, but upon a wilful and settled resolution and deliberation, they digged down a wall, the walls of the house where Dinah was ; or, as in the margin of our bibles, They houghed oxen, that is, drove away the oxen and cattle of the Shechemites.
- 7 Cursed [be] their anger, for [it was] fierce ; and their wrath, for it was cruel,* violent and outrageous ; therefore the divine purpose is this, I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel ; I will disperse them and their posterity among the children of Jacob or Israel.†

- 8 Judah, thou [art he] whom thy brethren shall praise, thy tribe shall be famous for the royal dignity belonging to it, and the Messiah's coming out of it, (Heb. vii. 14. 1 Chron. v. 2.) which shall be matter of great praise and honour to thee : thy hand [shall be] in the neck of thine enemies, thou shalt attack them sword in hand, and utterly destroy their power ; thy father's children shall bow down before thee : this was fulfilled in David and Solomon, who governed all the twelve tribes. Then follows a beautiful comparison ; Judah [is] a lion's whelp, who walks about with a stately air when he goes from devouring the prey ; my son, thou art gone up ; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, who sometimes lies down, and even sleeps over his prey, conscious of his own strength, and fearless of any foe ; so shalt thou be great, and secure in thy victories ; and as an old lion, one full grown and fierce ; who shall rouse him up ? none of his enemies shall dare to provoke him ; at least, not without ruin to themselves : this is a beautiful gradation, and intimates the increase of his power. Then follows the great promise of the Messiah from him : The acceptre, the walking

* Dr. Kennicott translates these verses thus : v. 5. *their very contracts are instruments of violence.* v. 6. *For in their anger they slew the men, and in their selfwill they destroyed the priests.* v. 7. *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ; and their confederacy, for it was cruel.*

† This accordingly came to pass, and they had cities in every one of the tribes ; yet this was afterward turned into a blessing. See Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10.

- staff, or rod, the emblem of authority, shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, from his posterity, until Shiloh come, till the promised Messiah shall be sent; it shall be a distinct tribe, judged by its own laws, and not dispersed till Christ shall come; and unto him [shall] the gathering of the people [be;] some of all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, shall yield obedience to Christ, acknowledging him for*
- 11 *their Lord and Saviour. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes; his portion of land in Canaan shall abound with vines and fat pastures, inso-*
much that wine and milk shall be as plentiful and common, in a
- 12 *manner, as water: His eyes [shall be] red with wine, and his teeth white with milk; his eyes shall be brighter than*
wine, and his teeth whiter than milk; all the people shall be
healthful and cheerful, through the abundance they shall possess.
- 13 *Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; here is an al-*
lusion to his name, which signifies, dwellings; the situation of
the twelve tribes being determined by lot, makes these predic-
tions the more remarkable; and he [shall be] for an haven of
ships; and his border [shall be] unto Zidon; their coasts
were so situated as to be fit for easy and ordinary commerce
with the Sidonians.
- 14 *Issachar [is] a strong ass* couching down between two bur-*
dens: his posterity shall be of great strength, but small courage;
and therefore shall patiently submit to any taxes which may be
- 15 *laid upon them by their neighbours: And he saw that rest*
[was] good, and the land that [it was] pleasant; he shall de-
light in peace and cultivating the earth; and accordingly he
bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute;
instead of opposing the Canaanites, they actually became tribu-
tary to them.
- 16 *Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.*
An allusion to his name, ch. xxx. 6. he has absolute power within
himself to rule and govern, though the son of a concubine; as
- 17 *other tribes who are descended from free women have. Dan*
shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth
the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.† Then
Jacob, finding himself ready to faint, breaks out into this ejacu-
- 18 *lation; I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD; ‡ or, I am*
waiting for thy salvation, for the happiness of a future state
and world; I am ready and willing to die when thou pleasest.

* The asses of that country were larger than ours; princes and great men used to ride upon them.

† A person should arise out of that tribe, who, though no danger shall be apprehended, yet he shall be like a serpent, or red adder, lying in the dust, which may be trod upon unawares, and shall bite the horse and throw the rider. This was fulfilled in Samson destroying the Philistines when blind, and in the disposition of this tribe to manage their wars rather by cunning and craft, than open hostilities. See Judges, xviii. 27.

‡ The Chaldeans, For the salvation of the King, the Messiah.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us guard against an unstable temper, which was the cause of Reuben's sin, and the loss of his privileges. Let us labour after steadfastness of soul, that we may not waver to and fro, and be easily impressed and seduced by temptation ; that our hearts may be fixed for God and religion ; that we may be steadfast and unmoveable ; that nothing may turn us aside from it. If we lose the excellency of virtue and piety, no other excellency will be of any avail to us.

2. Let us abhor cruelty of all kinds ; especially under the mask of religion. Jacob remembered Simeon and Levi. Moses also leaves a mark of infamy on his great grandfather. We here see, to what a length the irregular workings of anger and resentment may carry us, and what a lasting blot they may leave on our names. Let us guard against selfwill and obstinacy, running hastily to execute revengeful and wicked purposes. It is cursed anger, especially when religion is brought in and made the pretence for it. What innumerable evils and miseries arise from anger and revenge ! *Be angry and sin not ; restrain its workings, and guard your own spirits ; make no friendship with furious men, avoid their company ; and let all those who hate and destroy one another, be our abhorrence. O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.*

3. Let us be thankful that Shiloh is come, and that we are gathered to him. Jacob, at this distance of time, and on his dying bed, *saw his day, and was glad ;* it was his support and comfort. In the fulness of time he was manifested ; the promised seed was born *before the sceptre departed from Judah, or a lawgiver from between his feet.* By him the people were gathered together, united in a new, a glorious, a christian church ; and through the riches of divine grace we are gathered into it. Though by nature we belong to the wild olive, to the gentile world, yet by grace we are united to the true vine ; and all the children of God that were scattered abroad are gathered together, and are one in Christ Jesus. Many patriarchs, kings, and prophets desired to see this day, but were not so highly favoured. Let us be thankful for our privileges, and improve them well, that we may be *a holy nation, a peculiar people ;* otherwise, we may fear that God will yet divide and scatter us ; and the greater our privileges have been, the sorer will be our punishment.

4. Let us adore the hand of God in all the blessings of our situation. It is he who *fixes the bounds of our habitation ;* who hath caused the lines to fall to us in pleasant places, and given us a goodly heritage, a fruitful country, where agriculture and navigation are so happily united, and the blessings of Judah and Zebulun are joined together. Let us serve the Lord with cheerfulness, in the abundance of all the good things we enjoy ; never make them

a bait to luxury, but use them so as not to abuse them, and show our gratitude to God for them. We should be thankful that God hath given to some a taste for navigation and the sea, and to others for the labours and pleasures of a country life : that we have the produce of our own land in such abundance, and the produce of other countries, and of foreign climes, brought to our shores. God is to be owned and honoured in all this.

5. Let us be thankful that God hath raised us up so many judges, who have judged the people in equity, and formed wise and good laws ; so many deliverers, who have rescued us from tyranny, slavery, and sin, and overthrown those who would have trampled upon us, *saying to our souls, Bow down, that we may go over you* ; who have confounded our enemies amidst their most sanguine prospects, and established our civil and religious liberties.

6. Let us, like the good patriarch, be waiting for God's salvation ; and thankful that we have so much clearer discoveries of it than he had : it is a salvation worth waiting for. Aged christians, especially, should cultivate this temper ; they have seen much of the goodness of God to them, and experienced his faithfulness and care. Trust him then, in the last stages of your journey ; and patiently *wait all the days of your appointed time, till your great change shall come*. Be assured that God's time is the best ; wait cheerfully for so glorious an event ; it is the best frame to be found in when your Lord comes ; and you will find it good indeed to *hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God*.

CHAP. XLIX. 19, to the end.

Jacob having recovered a little strength, and being revived, proceeds to bless the other tribes.

- 19 **G**AD, a troop shall overcome him : but he shall overcome at the last.*
- 20 Out of Asher his bread [shall be] fat, and he shall yield royal dainties ; *his corn land shall be very rich, and his bread corn of the choicest sort, fit for princes. They dwell near mount Carmel, which was a very rich country.*
- 21 Naphtali [is] a hind let loose : he giveth goodly words. *Some think this refers to his temper, that he should be amiable and gentle, and his descendants remarkable for eloquence.†*

* Here is an allusion to his name, which signifies a troop ; many enemies shall overcome him ; the Ammonites and Moabites did so ; see Jer. xlix. 1. *but he shall overcome at the last*. So he did under Jephtha, and kept possession of the country till the captivity. 1 Chron. v. 26.—22. Dent. xxxiii. 20.

† I rather think it means they should live in a large and plentiful country, be lovers of liberty, like a hind let loose ; and, being of a courteous, friendly disposition, should live in peace with their neighbours. Accordingly, we read of few wars among themselves, or oppression from others.

- 22 Joseph, whose name signifies fruitful [is] a fruitful bough, [even] a fruitful bough by a well ; [whose] branches run over the well ; his posterity spread themselves to a great distance ; we read of the thousands of Manasseh, and ten thousands of
- 23 Ephraim. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot [at him,] and hated him ; many set themselves against him, his brethren, mistress, master, and Pharaoh's courtiers, as the rabbis say, and endeavoured to ruin him : But his bow abode in strength ; he stood against all, like a tough bow, which neither breaks nor is weakened by use : his virtue was strong and unconquerable ; and the arms of his hands were made strong, to draw his bow and stand his ground, by the hands of the mighty [God] of Jacob, who laid his hand on Joseph's arm, while he was drawing the bow, and enabled him to conquer (from thence, that is, from God, [is] the shepherd, the stone of Israel ; from God's power and providence it was that Joseph became the shepherd, to feed me and my family in the famine ; or, the rock of Israel, to support us ; he was the feeder and supporter of the whole family :) [Even] by, or from, the God of thy father, who shall help thee : and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, rain and dew, which shall make thy land fruitful, blessings of the deep that lieth under, springs of water, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb, multitudes both of children and cattle, and those well
- 26 nourished : The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors ; I tenderly blessed thee when a child, and prayed for thee ; and now I have the pleasure to see my prayers have been heard for thee, more than my father's for me, in the extent of the blessings, which are unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills ; of large extent and long continuance, even unto Bashan, and Tabor, and Hermon, and they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren, when he was sold into Egypt, and afterward was there highly advanced to a singular degree of honour.
- 27 Benjamin shall ravin [as] a wolf, be strong, fierce, and warlike ; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil. This was the case at the beginning and end of that tribe ; when ten were lost, this returned with Judah, and mingled with it.
- 28 All these [are] the twelve tribes of Israel, the state and condition of the twelve tribes : and this [is it] that their father spake unto them, and blessed them ; every one according to his blessing he blessed them, with such a blessing as God saw fit for them, and his spirit dictated to Jacob.
- 29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people : bury me with my fathers in the
- 30 cave that [is] in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the cave

that [is] in the field of Machpelah, which [is] before Mam-
 re, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the
 field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place.
Hereby, he designed to withdraw their minds from Egypt, and
 31 *to fix them upon Canaan.* There they buried Abraham and
 Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his
 33 wife ; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field,
 and of the cave that [is] therein [was] from the children of,
 32 Heth. And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his
 sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the
 ghost, and was gathered unto his people, *to his pious ances-
 tors in another world. Thus peaceful and happy was the death
 of this friend of God !*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HE lot of Gad is an emblem of the state of true
 christians ; *Gad, a troop shall overcome him ; but he
 shall overcome at the last.* They are often overcome in this world,
 by afflictions and temptations ; but at length *they shall be con-
 querors, and more than conquerors.* It is an emblem of the state
 of the church ; which has often been overcome and brought low,
 but not destroyed ; and at length it shall triumph gloriously, and
 vanquish all opposition. Great is the truth, and will prevail ;
 even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

2. Let us imitate the sweetness of disposition that is celebrated
 in Naphtali ; as a loving *hind, who giveth goodly words.* Good
 words are cheap ; it is easy to behave with civility and respect,
 and to secure the friendship of, and an interest in, those around
 us. It is not in our power to do service to every body ; but we
 may use kind and respectful words to every one. The poor may
 do this ; and if the rich will not add this to their other gifts,
 they will signify little. *On our tongue let there be the law of kind-
 ness.* Yet we should not be content with this, *but love, not in
 word or tongue only, but in deed and in truth.*

3. Let us pray that the power which strengthened Joseph,
 may also strengthen us under our difficulties and temptations.
 The archers have shot at us ; many are tempting us to sin ;
 there is a busy adversary who is shooting his fiery darts. Let us
 pray, that the Lord would be our shield ; our strength is from
 him ; he makes our *bow to abide in strength ; and the arms of our
 hands are made strong, by the hand of the mighty God of Jacob.*
 What an amiable idea does this give us of divine assistance,
 and how suitable a prayer is this for all christians, and ministers
 especially ! They draw the bow ; God must put his hand on
 theirs, if they desire success. They must aim right ; but it is
 God alone that can give their words force and strength. Let us
 pray for this, and remember, that our strength to bear afflictions,

and to vanquish temptations, is all from God. *Lord, make thy strength perfect in our weakness, and thy grace sufficient for us.*

4. In whatever instances we find support or esteem, learn from whence it proceeds, and to whom we are to give the praise. If we meet with those who are friends, either to body or soul, that feed the one or the other, on whose friendship or affection we can build a sure foundation, remember from whence it proceeds, even *from the mighty God of Jacob*. This made Joseph strong against temptations; gave him favour in the sight of men, and prosperity in all that he set his hand unto. *Though the archers shot at him, his bow abode in strength*. This was especially true of our Lord Jesus Christ; the archers shot at him, the scribes and pharisees, and Herod and Pilate; Satan tempted him, but he overcame all. Now, he is the shepherd of his church; he feeds his people with knowledge and understanding; leads them in the right way; secures them from danger, *and causes them to lie down in green pastures*. He is the foundation stone; the chief corner stone; the support of the whole spiritual building; all this is owing to the hand of the Lord that was with him. Let us ascribe praise to God, who delivered his dear Son, and made him such a blessing to the world; *thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift*.

5. Learn to adore the perfect knowledge of God, that points out such a variety of events; that foretells the condition of each tribe so long before, and exactly corresponded with their circumstances, though determined afterward by lot. Let us reverence and adore so wise and glorious a God, and the spirit of prophecy which he gave to Jacob.

6. Let us choose our lot among God's people, that we may be gathered to them at last. Jacob had followed the faith of Abraham and Isaac, and others of the patriarchs, holy men that went before him, and at death *he was gathered to them*, and joined to their society. *Let us also be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*. Let us join our souls to God, and walk in his ways; and at length we shall be joined to the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; to enjoy all those blessings, which God hath prepared for them that love him.

CHAP. L.

This chapter gives an account of Jacob's funeral ; of the friendship renewed between Joseph and his brethren ; and of Joseph's death.

- 1 **A**ND Joseph, who exceeded his brethren, as in piety to-
ward God, so in filial affection and duty to his father, fell
upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him,
and thus paid his last respects to so pious and tender a parent.
- 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to em-
3 balm his father :* and the physicians embalmed Israel.†
And forty days were fulfilled for him ; for so are fulfilled the
days of those which are embalmed : and the Egyptians
mourned for him threescore and ten days, *thirty days more*
than the forty for embalming.
- 4 And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph
spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have
found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of
5 Pharaoh, ‡ saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I
die : in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of
Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore, let me go
up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.
- 6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as
he made thee swear.
- 7 And Joseph went up to bury his father : and with him
went up all, or many of the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of
his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, *the consider-*
able persons of the king's household, and officers, civil and mili-
8 *tary, to show respect to Joseph and Jacob ;* And all the house
of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house : only their
little ones, and their flocks, and their herds they left in the
9 land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots
and horsemen, *to be a defence, and drive away the Canaanites, if*
they had taken possession of the place : and it was a very great
10 company, and a grand procession. And they came to the
threshing floor of Atad, which [is] beyond Jordan, *that is, from*
Egypt ; and there they mourned with a great and very sore

* It was a piece of state to have physicians in the house, who performed the necessary acts of surgery, and embalmed the dead.

† This was done by washing the body with oil of cinnamon, myrrh, and other rich spices, for forty days, and by putting some of these ingredients into the body. It then lay in pickle, in nitre or salt petre, till seventy days were completed from the time they began their work ; and thus the body would keep for many centuries, as we know the mummies do. Thus Joseph complied with the Egyptian custom out of respect to his father, and to preserve the body for burial in Canaan.

‡ It was respectful for Pharaoh not to go without his leave ; and he set some of the courtiers to ask for it ; because, as *Herodotus* tells us, it was not permitted for any in mourning to come into the presence of the prince ; therefore he desires them to tell Pharaoh of his path.

- lamentation : and he made a mourning for his father
- 11 seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This [is] a grievous mourning to the Egyptians : wherefore the name of it was called Abel mizzaim, *that is, the mourning*
- 12 *of the Egyptians*, which [is] beyond Jordan. And his sons did
- 13 unto him according as he commanded them : For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.
- 14 And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.
- 15 And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. *They had no reason to imagine this ; but a guilty conscience causes fear, and*
- 16 *is never fully at rest.* And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,
- 17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin : for they did unto thee evil : * and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. *This may be designed to intimate their repentance, and show they were of the same religion with him.* And Joseph wept when they spake unto him, *justifying their perplexity, and grieving at their doubts of his good*
- 18 *will.* And his brethren also went and fell down before his
- 19 face ; and they said, Behold, we [be] thy servants. And Joseph made a noble reply, and said unto them, Fear not : for [am] I in the place of God, to punish the injury done to me ? *Ought I not rather to remember that I am mortal, and accountable, and need forgiveness ? Am I not, under God, (as others*
- 20 *read it) under his eye, and subject to him ? But as for you, ye thought evil against me ; [but] God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as, [it is] this day, to save much people alive.*
- 21 Now therefore, fear ye not : I will nourish you and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them, *mentioned their fault very gently, and promised them his favour and protection.*
- 22 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house : and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years : *having been*
- 23 *eighty years governor of Egypt.* And Joseph saw Ephraim's children, of the third [generation :] the children also of Man-
chir the son of Manassch were brought up upon Joseph's

* This was probably a false story ; Jacob knew Joseph too well to suspect that he would bear ill will to his brethren, or he would have given the charge to Joseph, and not to them.

knees ; he took pleasure, in their infancy, to let them sit on his lap, and dandle them on his knees.

- 24 And Joseph, *finding his end draw near, took a solemn farewell of, and said unto his brethren, I die : and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Thus he expressed his faith in God's promise, and his full assurance*
 25 *that he would accomplish it.* And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, in some extraordinary manner, and deliver you from this land, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.*
 26 So Joseph died, [being] an hundred and ten years old ; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. *Thus this Book concludes with the death of these eminent men.*
 A.M. 2369.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see that mourning and death invade the houses of the most eminent saints, and the palaces of the greatest princes. Neither piety nor grandeur can be secure from this ; *there is no discharge in this war ; death makes no distinction, but comes to all.*

2. When eminent saints are taken away, the forms of mourning are peculiarly proper, both on account of the loss which the world sustains, and out of respect to the pious dead. It is fit that we should lament the death of good men, and lay it to heart ; *when the righteous perish, the excellent of the earth are taken away.* Decent funerals, according to persons' circumstances, are very commendable. Thus devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made a great lamentation over him. The bodies of the saints are under Christ's care ; he will watch over them, and put honour upon them another day.

3. How restless does guilt make the mind ! After so many years of kind and generous treatment, it is strange that Joseph's brethren should suspect that any degree of resentment or revenge was harboured in his breast. They knew they had done iniquity, and therefore suspected him. See the importance and necessity of keeping a good conscience ; fear and suspicion arise from a guilty mind.

4. How beautiful does generosity and kindness appear ! Joseph was remarkable for this ; the belief of Providence led him to it. He not only pardoned and excused his brethren, but nourished them as his own children. He *spoke kindly to them*, spoke to their hearts, removed their fears, and did not keep them in suspense. We learn from so bright an example, to forgive them

* Accordingly, when they went out of Egypt, we are expressly told they carried Joseph's bones with them, as Stephen intimates they did the bones of the other patriarchs. *Acts* vii. 16.

that injure us. Let the remembrance of Joseph excite us to this; *that we be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*; thus let us be imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love.

5. Let us labour and pray that we may die in faith, as Joseph did. So the apostle says, *Heb. xi. 22. By faith Joseph when he died, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.* Let us exercise faith in God's promises; believe that it shall be as he hath declared; trust in his mercy and faithfulness, and *quietly wait for his salvation.*

6. When our pious friends are taken away, it is a very great satisfaction to think, that *God will visit us*, and fulfil all his gracious promises. This hath often been the language of good men to their survivors, *I die, but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, to the land he hath promised.* Whatever friends die, God lives; though we should be disappointed in our hopes from them, or they be taken away from us, *God will surely visit us*; visit us with the tokens of his presence and favour, and make up the want of all earthly comforts; he will visit us in our retirements and solitude, and bring us out of this house of bondage, to the heavenly Canaan, to the land which he hath promised; he will bring us to that better country, which the patriarchs sought, even an heavenly one. *There we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and other saints, who are gone before us to the kingdom of God: wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

The Second Book of *MOSES*,

CALLED,

E X O D U S.

INTRODUCTION.

***WE** are now entering on the second Book of MOSES, called, Exodus, that is, The going out, or, The departure. It contains the history of the Israelites for the period of one hundred and forty five years, from the death of Joseph to the building of the Tabernacle ; including an account of the increase and oppression of Israel in Egypt ; of MOSES being sent to deliver them ; of the ten plagues ; of their deliverance with a strong hand ; of their passing through the Red Sea, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host there ; of their safe conduct through the wilderness for forty years ; of the covenant between God and them at Sinai ; of his giving them laws and judgments ; of his ordaining the priesthood ; and the erection of the Tabernacle.*

CHAP. I.

Contains an account of the increase of the Israelites ; the oppression they underwent ; and of the destruction of their children.

¹ **N**OW these [are] the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt ; set down here to show the accomplishment of the promises in their great increase ; every man and his household, that is, his children and nephews,
² but not servants, who came with Jacob. Reuben, Simeon,
³ Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan, and
⁴ Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. And all the souls that came out
⁵ of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls : for Joseph was in
⁶ Egypt [already.] And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and
⁷ all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, like the fish of the sea, and they multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, had strong and healthful children ; and the land was filled with them ; so that in two hundred and fifteen years they amounted to six hundred thousand men. Numb. xxvi. 51.

- 8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, of a different race, or family,* which knew not Joseph, regarded not him, nor any of his kindred, though he had deserved so well of the whole kingdom. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel [are] more and mightier than we ; their country is more populous, wealthy, and fruitful. Upon this he called his counsellors, and said with violence, Come on, let us deal wisely with them ; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, as it is natural for people in such circumstances to do, and [so] get them up out of the land, to Canaan, which they are often talking about. Therefore they did set over them task masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh, which was a common name for all the kings of Egypt, treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses, strong fortified cities to lay up their stores in.†
- 9 But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew, through the overruling providence and blessing of God. And they, that is, the Egyptians, were grieved, through envy and fear, because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour :
- 10 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, building those cities, making brick, digging trenches for rivers to convey the water through the land : and all their service, wherein they made them serve, [was] with rigour, that they might reduce their numbers, and more easily keep them in slavery.‡
- 11 And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, the midwives who attended the Hebrews, but were themselves Egyptians, of which the name of the one [was] Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah : these were the chief, to whom, no doubt, great rewards were promised : And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see [them] upon the stools ; if it [be] a son, then ye shall kill him, let him be strangled privately : but if it [be] a daughter, then she shall live.* But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, it would have been

* Probably one of the shepherd kings who came from Arabia, according to Manetho, as quoted by Josephus, and who about this time invaded Egypt ; or the Horites, whom the descendants of Esau drove out. *Deut.* ii. 12, 22.

† Or, craftily ; so Stephen, *Acts* vii. 19. *The same dealt subtilly with our children, &c.* or formed crafty and treacherous designs against them.

‡ The first was called *Tanis*, and the latter thought to be *Pelusium*, which in *Ezek.* xxx. 15. is called the strength of Egypt, and by historians, the key of Egypt. These were on the borders of Syria, which kept them from the encroachments of their enemies on that side, and prevented the Israelites from returning back to Canaan.

§ Well might Egypt be called an iron furnace, an house of bondage ! but God appointed all this as a punishment for their growing idolatry, to awaken their desires to return to Canaan, and to make their national deliverance the more remarkable.

* They preserved the females, who were in general more beautiful than the Egyptians.

- the highest treachery and cruelty to have done it ; but saved the*
 18 *men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the*
midwives and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing,
 19 *and have saved the men children alive ? And the midwives*
said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women [are] not as
the Egyptian women ; for they [are] lively, and are deliver-
ed ere the midwives come in unto them. This was no doubt
 20 *often the case, but not always. Therefore God dealt well with*
the midwives : and the people multiplied, and waxed very
 21 *mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared*
God, that he made them houses ; God increased their families,
and prospered their affairs.
 22 *And Pharaoh, finding this design ineffectual, broke out into*
open rage and violence, and charged all his people, saying,
Every son that is born ye shall take by force and cast into the
river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**EARN hence how wisely God permits his churches to be afflicted. He did thus to Israel, as a punishment for their idolatry, and to excite their desires to depart from Egypt. Thus God afflicts his people still, to punish them for sin, to wean them from this world of distress ; and makes it a house of bondage, that they may long to go free, and not desire to live here always. Be our afflictions ever so long, or ever so bitter, they are appointed to answer some very wise purpose.

2. See how powerfully he can preserve them amidst their affliction, and strengthen them by it. Their enemies thought by this means to weaken their strength, and lessen their numbers ; but God increased them. Thus the enemies of the church, like the Egyptians, do but increase their own grief. Times of affliction and persecution, have been those times in which the church has flourished most ; the ordinances of worship are more conscientiously attended upon, and watchfulness and prayer more seriously regarded. The faith and patience of God's servants bring in others, so that the saying is true, ' the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.' Persecuting the church, is but like casting manure upon the ground ; which for a while covers the plants, and seems to destroy them, but it makes the earth more fertile, and the plants more numerous and vigorous.

3. What an excellent principle is the fear of God, and what a noble remedy against the fear of man ! *The midwives feared God, and therefore feared not the wrath of the king.* They thought it was their duty rather to obey God, to keep to the rules of justice, fidelity, and humanity, than to obey men ; and dared to disobey a bloody and tyrannical prince, rather than displease God. *The fear of man bringeth a snare, but the fear of God keepeth from*

evil, even from doing evil privately ; which the midwives were commanded to do, though hid from the eye and inspection of men. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ; a good understanding have all they that keep his commandments.

4. How safe and happy are they in whom such principles prevail ! Pharaoh might be angry ; but what did it signify, when God favoured them and made their way prosperous ? Some have asserted that they were married to Israelites, and their families built up by them, and made eminent in Israel ; but this is certain, God rewarded their kindness to his people, and repaid their compassion with prosperity. He that feareth the Lord, shall not only be safe from fear of evil, but shall be rewarded with all desirable good. *O fear the Lord then, all ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.* The Egyptian midwives were an instance of this truth ; *In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.* Of this we may be sure, that God's salvation is nigh unto them that fear him. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge.*

CHAP. II.

We are now entering on the history of Moses, the man of God, the deliverer and lawgiver of Israel. In this chapter we have the occurrences of his infancy ; his pious choice when grown up ; his settling for a while in the land of Midian ; and God's gracious regard to the afflictions of his people.

- 1 **A**ND there went a man of the house of Levi, *Amram the son of Kohath, (ch. vi. 20.)* and took [to wife] *Jochebed*
- 2 *his kinswoman, a daughter of Levi.* And the woman conceived, and bare a son ; *she had two children before this, Miriam and Aaron :* And when she saw him that he [was a] goodly [child,] she hid him three months, *in his father's house, Acts*
- 3 *vii. 20.* And when she could not longer hide him, *when notice was taken of it by the Egyptians, and search was made for him,* she took for him an ark, or basket, of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein ; and she laid [it] in the flags by the river's brink. *No doubt her design was, to hide it there till the search was over, and then fetch it back and preserve it. This, the apostle tells us, was done in faith, trusting in Providence to preserve it,*
- 4 And his sister, *who was about twelve years old,* stood afar off, to wit, or mark, what would be done to him.
- 5 And the daughter of Pharaoh* came down to wash [her-

* Called Thermutis by Josephus, and Meris by others ; she was married, but had no children.

- self] at the river, in a bathing place at the bottom of the king's gardens, which came down to the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened [it,] she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This [is, one] of the Hebrew's children. *She might imagine this by the king's edict, and be certain of it, from his circumcision. Her maidens gathered around to look at the babe, and his sister joined them.* Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give [thee] thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.* And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, *that is, drawn out*: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.†
- 11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, *being forty years old, (Acts vii. 23.)* that he went out unto his brethren, *with a full purpose to abandon the honours of the court, to join himself to the poor oppressed people of God, and lend them what help he could for their deliverance*; and he looked on their burdens *with grief and pity*: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren; *probably a task master on the point of killing an Israelite.* And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that [there was] no man, he slew the Egyptian, *he defended the oppressed; and, knowing the Israelites could not have justice done them, he*
- 13 *prudently hid him in the sand.†* And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? *and would have reconciled matters between*
- 14 *them.* And he that did the wrong (Acts vii. 27.) said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to

* It was a happy circumstance that he was nursed by his own mother, as he would be managed with tenderness; know his own parents; be brought up in the true religion; have his life secured through Pharaoh's daughter; and some wages and provision be made for the family.

† Here is a great chasm in the history of Moses. His modesty forbade him relating particulars; but Stephen tells us, (Acts vii. 22.) that he was brought up at court, and skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians; such as arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and natural philosophy, and thus fitted for his future station. Stephen adds, that he was mighty in words and deeds; an eloquent man, (though not a good speaker) as his admirable compositions testify; a wise counsellor; and, some add, a mighty general; with many other particulars of his early life, which cannot be depended upon.

‡ Stephen says (Acts vii. 25.) he supposed that the Israelites by this would have known that he would deliver them. Probably he exhorted them to return to Canaan, promised to lead them, and told them the time for their deliverance was near; but they understood not, therefore their captivity was prolonged.

- kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian ?* And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian : and he sat down by the well.
- 16 Now the priest, or prince, of Midian, *who was a descendant of Abraham, by Keturah*, had seven daughters : and they came and drew [water,] and filled the troughs to water their father's flock ; *this was the employment of persons of rank in those days.* And the shepherds of some neighbouring prince came and drove them away, *insisting that they would water their flocks first* : but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father another, *name for Jethro, or else his father*, he said, How [is it that] ye are come so soon today ? And they said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew [water] enough for us, and watered the flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where [is] he ? why [is] it [that] ye have left the man ? call him, that he may eat bread : and they did so. And Moses was content to dwell with the man : *thus he was sheltered for the present, and prepared for the greater services that were before him* : and he gave to Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bare [him] a son, and he called his name Gershom : for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.†
- 23 And it came to pass in process of time, *after forty years (Acts vii. 30.)* that the king of Egypt died : and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. *Though there was a new king, yet the old oppression continued, and their sufferings were as great as ever.* And God heard their groaning, took notice of their afflictions and burdens, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel with a kind and compassionate regard, and determined to show them mercy, and God had respect unto [them.‡]

* This was an impertinent and ungrateful speech ; he upbraided him with that for which he ought to have praised him, and which was a specimen of their promised deliverance : and this refusal of Moses by one, is imputed to all the rest of the Israelites, (Acts vii. 35.) and God, for their unthankfulness, withdrew him for forty years.

† The Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate versions add here, *She also bare another son to Moses, and he called him Eliezer, saying, The God of my fathers hath been my helper, &c. misc.*

‡ Or, according to the LXX, *And was made known unto them.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **S**EE how much of Providence is to be observed in those things which seem the result of chance. Providence appeared in the birth of Moses, and in supporting him till he was three months old, when he was better able to bear an abode in the ark. The same wise Providence laid him in the river, just at the time when Pharaoh's daughter came; she meant only to wash, but God intended other things. It was a providential circumstance to find the child weeping, to move her compassion. Had any other person came there and seen the child, it, most probably, had been thrown into the river, for to have rescued it would have been death. Let us adore the wisdom of Providence, which is *wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.*

2. On what minute accidents do the lives of men depend, yea, the lives of some of the best of men! In how precarious a situation was Moses! A little longer delay, and he had starved, or been carried away with the tide or stream of the river, or been devoured by the crocodiles. How many narrow escapes had those persons, whose names are so eminent in the Jewish and in the christian church! There are several instances in history, of most surprising events attending the births of the most eminent personages; in all which the wisdom and goodness of God is seen. The mercies of our infancy should be thankfully acknowledged. How many near escapes from death have we all had, though not in so remarkable a manner as Moses; by the same Providence we were taken out of the womb, hung on our mothers' breasts, and are preserved to this day.

3. Observe with pleasure, Moses choosing to suffer affliction with God's people: it was a wise choice, which the apostle Paul extols. There was every thing in Pharaoh's court, but religion, to engage him; nothing among the Israelites, but religion, to tempt him. He might have been serviceable to the Israelites at court; but he knew they were God's people, and therefore he chose to suffer with them. This choice we should make; we should form alliances with God's servants, and prefer affliction to sin, *the reproach of Christ rather than the riches of Egypt*, and *should have respect to the recompense of reward*, that is, to the glory which God hath promised.

4. How shameful are any contentions among brethren, especially under afflictions. It is a sad thing for them to quarrel, especially when they are joined in one common affliction. This is too often the case. The English exiles in Queen Mary's days, at Frankfort, quarrelled about habits and ceremonies. Those who were advocates for them, called the civil magistrate to interpose, and would not rest till they had driven out their brethren. There has often been great quarrels among sufferers, when persecuted by their brethren. Uncharitable contentions are shame-

ful among christians, especially among those who are under national discouragements, though not under great oppressions. One would have thought these troubles should have united the Israelites, but we find they did not. Bp. HALL observes, 'had this Israelite had a spark of good nature, he must have relented at Moses's remonstrance.' It is sad to vex one another, while vexed by a common adversary. One would have thought they had blows enough from the Egyptians. And thus, still is our great enemy busy, and christians are too prone to contend with each other. Let us avoid this, and remember that we are brethren, that we are fellowchristians, fellowservants, and fellowsufferers. Let brotherly love continue ; and leaving hatred and variance to the Egyptians, let us *follow after peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

5. Those that are in the wrong are often most impatient of reproof. What a surly answer was given to Moses. This language we often hear, or something like it, when we admonish transgressors. Moses intended a kindness to both, and to prevent the effect of the quarrel : but one of them could not bear it, and he was the aggressor. Nay, had not the story mentioned this, we should have concluded it from his angry impatience, which was a sign of guilt. It is our duty to exhort and reprove : but we must expect to meet with those who will be peevish and angry, and question our authority, which indeed the law of God, and the common principles of humanity give us. Let us carefully avoid this temper ourselves, and take reproof kindly. What signifies who it is that reproves, or what his qualities are ? it becomes us to consider what foundation there is for it. To call a man impertinent, and bid him look at home, is not clearing ourselves. *Let the righteous smite us,* and we should esteem it a kindness ; take it well, and make a good use of it, from whatever hand it comes.

6. God has a gracious regard to his people under their heaviest afflictions ; he hears their groanings, which affect his heart. He remembers his covenant, and has respect to them. See how tenderly God concerns himself for his people ; *as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him ;* therefore let us be patient, and cast our care upon him who careth for us.

CHAP. III.

Philo observes, that 'the feeding of sheep, is the best exercise and preparation for a kingdom, and the general government of mankind.' We find here, that Moses was first a shepherd, and then raised to be a leader and governor of God's people.

- N**OW Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian :* and he led the flock to the back or side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, so called because sanctified by God's appearing there now, (v. 5,) and giving the law there afterward, [even] to Horeb.†
- 2 And the angel of the LORD, that is, the *Shekinah*, appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush :‡ and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush [was] not consumed. *This was something very unaccountable,*
- 3 And Moses therefore said, I will now turn aside, and see this
- 4 great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses : calling him
- 5 by name, must greatly add to his surprise. And he said, Here [am] I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither, keep a respectful distance : put off thy shoes from off thy feet, in token of reverence and humility,|| for the place whereon thou standest [is] holy ground, made so by the special presence of God here. Thus he was excited to humility, reverence and godly fear.
- 6 Moreover he said, I [am] the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ; engaged to them by covenant and promise, which I am now come to perform ; and by this declaration he also intimated, (as Christ observes, Matt. xvii. 7.) that they were happy in another world, for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And Moses hid his face ; for he was afraid to look upon God ; his eyes were dazzled with the glory.
- 7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which [are] in Egypt, diligently observed, and mercifully regarded and pitied their misery, and have heard their cry by reason of their task masters ; for I know their sorrows ;
- 8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, (this intimates the speed and certainty of their deliverance,) and to bring them up out of that land unto a good

* This was not a mean employment, great men and princes were often engaged in it ; but it was mean for him who was bred at court, and perhaps might have looked forward to the crown of Egypt.

† This mountain had two tops, one called *Horeb*, the other *Sinai*. In this retirement it is thought by some, that he wrote the books of Genesis and Job.

‡ A bramble, or thorn bush, which might have been easily consumed ; several heathen writers have mentioned this circumstance. See *Patrick's* Com. in loc.

|| It was customary for the Egyptians to do so in the presence of their princes or great men, or when entering into the temples of their deities.

- land and a large one, *in comparison with Goshen*, unto a land flowing with milk and honey, *abounding with all the blessings of a fruitful land, not only for necessity, but delight; (Deut. viii. 7—9.)* unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me : and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. *He then gives him his commission and appoints him his ambassador or viceroy.*
- 10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.
- 11 And Moses modestly declined the service, and said unto God, Who, [am] I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt ?
- 12 And he, *that is, God*, said to encourage him, Certainly I will be with thee ; and this [shall be] a token unto thee, that I have sent thee : When thou hast brought forth the people
- 13 out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.* And Moses said unto God, Behold, [when] I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say to me, What [is] his name ? what shall I say unto them ? *which of thy names shall I use, whereby thy people may be encouraged to*
- 14 *expect deliverance from thee ?*† And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM : and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.‡
- 15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this [is] my name forever, and this [is] my memorial unto all generations, *by which I will be remembered, owned, and served by my people, and distinguished*
- 16 *from all others.* Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, *the heads of their tribes*, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,

* Thus God gave him two tokens of his presence with him ; the first was the burning bush, not consumed ; and the other, that he should worship hereafter on this mountain. These were designed to encourage him to deliver his message to Pharaoh, and to support and comfort him under the obstinacy and rebellions of the people. Moses was the first that ever spoke to others in the name of God, under such a commission, and therefore had need of some extraordinary sign to confirm his faith.

† It was customary in Egypt to give their gods some title of honour, beside the local name, taken from the place where they were worshipped, or their manner of doing it. So the Israelites would expect that some name or title of their God should be given them, beside that of the God of Abraham.

‡ This name was not only a title of honour, but it showed the vanity of other gods. It signifies, permanent, immutable, necessary existence, the name as JEHOVAH, *I will be what I will be.* This name would awaken the spirit, and encourage the hearts of all considerate Israelites. Many heathens after this inscribed it, or something similar to it, on their temples. Hilary, an ancient christian writer, says, these words charmed him, and gave him an high opinion of Moses, before he became a christian, there being no words so proper to describe the selfexistence of God.

appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and
 17 [seen] that which is done to you in Egypt : And I have
 said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt un-
 to the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the
 Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jeb-
 18 usites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And
 they shall hearken to thy voice ; *this was a great encourage-
 ment to him* : and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of
 Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him,
 The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us :* and
 now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the
 wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.
*This was a prudent and modest demand. Their sacrifices
 would be an abomination to the Egyptians, and would not
 be suffered among them ; therefore they asked to go to Sinai,
 which was just three days' journey, where they might serve
 him with safety.*

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go,
 20 no, not by a mighty hand.† And I will stretch out my hand,
 and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the
 21 midst thereof : and after that he will let you go. And I will
 give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians : and it
 shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty :
 22 But every woman shall borrow, or request,‡ of her neighbour,
 and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and
 jewels of gold, and raiment : and ye shall put [them] upon
 your sons, and upon your daughters ; and ye shall spoil the
 Egyptians.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us try to accommodate our minds to whatever cir-
 cumstances God allots us. Moses was the son of Pha-
 raoh's daughter : he was learned in all the knowledge of the
 Egyptians, and yet was content with the humble life of a shep-
 herd. We see the wisdom of God in all this : by living at court,
 he was formed to business ; by his retirement, meditation, and
 devotion, he was formed to eminent wisdom and piety, and a
 great command of temper. Moses had learned to subdue am-
 bitious desires, and to rest contented with his obscurity ; he fol-
 lowed the employment to which God called him. A contempt of
 an honest calling in those who are well born, shows great pride,
 but neither sense nor grace. If we keep to our callings, and are

* *Is called upon us*, is our God, we are called by his name, are his servants. *Kennicott.*

† God's foreknowledge of this did not lessen Pharaoh's guilt. Had Pharaoh granted this request, they would probably have returned ; but his refusing this just demand, made his future punishment just and righteous.

‡ *Kennicott says, ask, beg, or pray for.*

diligent therein, we are likely to meet with God, as Moses did ; for he will meet those that work righteousness and put their trust in him.

2. How lively an emblem was the burning-bush of the state of the church ! Many fires have been kindled to consume and destroy it, but it subsists to this day ; and all is owing to *the good will of him that dwelt in the bush*. It was an emblem of the church in Egypt, which was afflicted, but not destroyed. The bush is still burning, as it were, but is not consumed. Let us adore the power that preserves it, and that keeps his people. God is to none, but his enemies, a consuming fire. His church shall never perish, nor shall the gates of hell prevail against it.

3. Let us learn reverence in all our approaches to God ; *Take thy shoes from off thy feet*, was his command to Moses. Let us keep at an humble distance. So Solomon exhorts, *Eccles. v. 1. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God*. No ground is now holy ; but we have a holy God to do with, holy duties to be employed in, and holiness becometh his house ; *he will be sanctified by all them that draw nigh unto him, and by all the people he will be glorified*. He must be approached with holy reverence. However this may be an emblem of the dispensation of the law, which was a dispensation of terror, yet the gospel permits us to *draw near with boldness and confidence*, but still with reverence and godly fear. Nothing light, or trifling, should be found in his presence or worship ; every thing should be grave and solemn. *God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth*.

4. Let us entertain a venerable idea of the great and glorious Jehovah, as the I AM, the self-existent Being, who has life in himself, who is unoriginated, and self-sufficient. Adore him as eternal and immutable, the Father of lights, who is from everlasting to everlasting ; who is, and was, and is to come. Let us rejoice that we have such a God to do with, and make him our confidence and joy.

5. We should adore God's compassionate regard to his people, *v. 7. I have surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task masters, for I know their sorrows*. I have seen, I have seen ; have looked on till I could bear the sight no longer. God's people are ready to conclude, when afflictions are long and tedious, that he does not see, that he has forgotten to be gracious ; but *his eyes are ever on the righteous, and his ear is open to their cry* ; in proper time he will come down and help them ; he will not only deliver, but enrich them, like Israel ; give them *all spiritual blessings in heavenly things* ; will improve their virtues, and rectify their disorders ; *he will guide them by his counsel, and afterward receive them to glory*. Their secret sorrows and groanings are known to him ; their mightiest oppressors are not too hard for him. This should

comfort afflicted saints ; and lead us to pray, that God would arise and help those that are persecuted and oppressed ; that he would stretch out his hand against their enemies. His kindness to Israel manifests his mercy, and gives encouragement to his afflicted servants in all ages. *Wait on the Lord, then, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart ; and though the afflictions of the righteous are many, the Lord will deliver them out of them all.*

CHAP. IV.

God answers the objections of Moses against going to Egypt to deliver Israel ; his journey toward it ; in which he meets with Aaron, and delivers his message to Israel.

- 1 **A**ND Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice : for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee ; *how then*
- 2 *shall I prove my divine mission to them ?* And the LORD said unto him, What [is] that in thine hand ? *consider it well, and regard it attentively.* And he said, A rod, or shepherd's staff.
- 3 And he said, Cast it on the ground : And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, *of a large and terrible kind, such as that desert abounds with ;** and Moses fled from before
- 4 it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught hold of it, and it became a rod in his hand : *and God*
- 5 *said, Thou shalt do this miracle,* That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.
- 6 And the LORD gave him another sign, and said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom ; and when he took it out, be-
- 7 hold, his hand [was] leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again ; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, be-
- 8 hold, it was turned again as his [other] flesh.† And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice
- 9 of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, *which they wor-*

* Or, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, with some reason, a crocodile, to whose devouring jaws the Hebrew infants had been exposed.

† To cleanse and cure a leper, was reckoned the work of God alone ; and this might be designed to teach him and them, that God can change things on a sudden ; and that the miracles Moses should work, were not done by any inherent power in himself.

shipped as a god, and pour [it] upon the dry [land :] and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry [land :] thou shalt work this miracle, if they are not convinced by the other two. Moses then raised a second objection, taken from his own inability.

10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I [am] not eloquent, *not of a free and ready utterance*, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, *that is, since I have received thy commission* : but I [am] slow of speech, and

11 *of a slow tongue. God then makes a very grand reply* : And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth ? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind ?

12 have not I the LORD ? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say ; *I will suggest words, and make thee speak superior to all the orators of the age.* Nevertheless, *Moses desired to be excused* ; And he said, O my LORD, send, I pray thee, by the hand [of him whom] thou wilt send ; *such an one as thou knowest to be fitter for the employment than I am.** This however was a poor

13 excuse : And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, *for neglecting the divine commission*, and he said, [Is] not Aaron the Levite thy brother ? I know that he can speak well ; *Aaron's tongue, and thy head and heart, will make a complete ambassador, (as Mr. Henry observes.)* And also, behold,

14 he cometh forth to meet thee *by my direction* : and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart to execute *this commission. This was said to reprove Moses for his backwardness.*

15 And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth ; *clearly instruct, and strictly charge him, faithfully to declare my words* : and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and

16 will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people : and he shall be, [even] he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, *to deliver thy commands to Pharaoh*, and thou shalt be to him instead of God, *to direct and enjoin him what to say.* And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand,

17 wherewith thou shalt do signs. *Hence it was called the rod of God.*

18 And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which [are] in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. *He did not tell Jethro the great reason, lest he should have hindered him.* And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.

19 And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, *(this was a second appearance;†)* Go, return into Egypt : for all the men are

* Both these objections of Moses are remarkably perplexed in the Hebrew, and critics scarce know how to render it. In this view, they are very natural, as expressing the perplexity of his mind.

† Moses probably was still backward to go for fear of being slain there : but God assures him that his enemies were all dead. This was a further encouragement which he had not before.

- dead which sought thy life. *Herein was Moses a type of*
 20 *Christ. Matt. ii. 20.* And Moses, thus encouraged, took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt : and Moses took the rod of God in his hand, *because God had commanded him to carry it, and do wonders with it. Thus it was honoured above the sceptre of Pharaoh.*
- 21 And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand : but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go : *he hath wickedly hardened his heart against Israel, for a long time, and now, in righteous judgment, I will harden it.*
- 22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel [is] my son, *I have adopted him as mine, [even] my firstborn ; the first and only nation that I have chosen for my peculiar people, and therefore*
- 23 *not to be any longer subject to thy commands :* And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me : and if thou refuse to let him go,* behold, I will slay thy son, [even] thy firstborn. *This plague was afterward inflicted.†*
- 24 And it came to pass by the way in the inn, *where they stopped to rest all night,* that the LORD met him, *appeared to him in some visible, shape, and sought, by showing himself in some threatening posture, to kill him, for neglecting to circumcise his son ; which was probably done in compliance with his wife's humour.‡*
- 25 Then Zipporah, *by the order of Moses,* took a sharp stone, or knife, *made of flint,* and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast [it] at his feet *in a rage,* and said, Surely a bloody husband [art] thou to me, *because he insisted on the child's being circumcised.*
- 26 So he, *that is, the angel,* let him, *namely, Moses,||* go : then she said, A bloody husband [thou art,] because of the circumcision.
- 27 And the LORD said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of
- 28 God, and kissed him.* And Moses received him *with great affection,* and told Aaron all the words of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.
- 29 And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the
- 30 elders of the children of Israel : And Aaron spake all the

* But thou hast refused to let him go. Samar. Pent.

† The whole message is very grand and awful ; menacing [the proud prince with infinitely superior authority.

‡ This was a great neglect in Moses, and, as he was going in a public character, would be a reproach to him and his family.

|| Others render it, *So he, that is, Moses, let her go ;* sent her back to her father : it was not proper she should accompany him with such a turbulent temper : and that this was the case, is probable from ch. xviii. 2.

* This plain and express revelation to Aaron, directing him to the time and place where he should meet Moses, would tend greatly to confirm the faith of Moses.

words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people, *as God ordered, v. 16.* And the people received them and their message with a suitable disposition, and believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, *had thus appeared to them, and promised to deliver them,* and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped, *in token of their gratitude and readiness to comply with all the requirements of the Lord.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **WE** are here encouraged to trust in God to furnish us for the work to which he calls us: as he is able to strengthen the faith and enliven the obedience of his servants. Let us not be discouraged from his service, by a sense of our own weakness. A modest selfdiffidence is allowable and commendable; but when it carries us so far as to neglect our duty, and distrust God, it is criminal. God made man's mouth, and gave him capacity. The consideration of this is a great comfort to private christians, when they are called to lead the devotions of their families, or more private religious societies; and is also a great comfort to ministers, amidst the imperfections of their speech and address. He can give us a mouth and wisdom. God will take it ill if we are backward to speak and act for him, when we have so good a master to serve, so kind a mediator, so many precious promises, and such glorious rewards. If our hearts are sincere, *his spirit will help our infirmities:* and then, though our address should be mean, and our language not eloquent, we may trust in him to give his blessing, *who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings can perfect praise.*

2. God's children may depend upon it that he will defend their cause, and protect them in every circumstance; for, *as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Israel is my son;* I will not suffer him to be abused or oppressed. God regards his children amidst all their sorrows; he remembers their relation to him; and will, sooner or later, appear for their deliverance.

3. Those who are employed for God, and are in conspicuous stations, should manage themselves and their families wisely. God's anger against Moses for neglecting his duty, should teach ministers and heads of families to remove every thing that may be offensive to him, and to practise diligently what he requires; not to set a bad example, or give encouragement to sin. It is a melancholy thing, when the wives of such hang heavy on the interest of religion, and hinder the regular observance of divine institutions. Let heads of families, therefore, learn to rule their own houses well.

4. Learn^{*} with what temper we should receive the promises of deliverance in the gospel, v. 31. *And the people believed : and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.* Thus let us express our gratitude to God, that he hath visited and redeemed his people ; be ready to follow his directions, and behave worthy the favours which he intends to bestow upon us. Let us bless the Lord, who hath showed us light and mercy, and meet him in the way of righteousness and obedience.

CHAP. V. 1, to the end. CHAP. VI. 1.

Moses having delivered his message to Israel, waits upon Pharaoh. We have here the reception which Pharaoh gave the message from God ; the further hardships the people endured ; and their remonstrances to Pharaoh and Moses.

- 1 **A**ND afterward Moses and Aaron, *and the elders of Israel with them, as they were commanded, ch. iii.* went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness,
 2 *that is, a feast upon a sacrifice.* And Pharaoh *made a most impious* and insolent reply, and said, Who [is] the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go ? I know not the LORD, neither
 3 will I let Israel go.* And they said, *This is no scheme or contrivance of our own, for the God of the Hebrews hath met with us, hath appeared to us and given us a command to do so ; therefore* let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God ; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword ; *lest he be angry and destroy us, and then you will lose the benefit of our labour.*†
 4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works ? get you unto your burdens, *you among the rest, though you take upon*
 5 *you to represent others.* And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now [are] many, and ye make them rest from their burdens, *and therefore I sustain great damage by these your impertinent applications.*

* Pharaoh thought he was some titular, or local god of Israel, and concluded, that since he was not able to prevent their being in subjection to Egypt, there was no danger to be apprehended from him. This was an impious speech, even upon his own principles, for the heathens thought it a necessary duty to treat the gods of their neighbours with great reverence.

† It might also intimate, that as God would punish them if they did not go, so he would also punish Pharaoh if he did not suffer them to go. There is a decency and spirit in this address, beyond what commentators have taken notice of, but it had no good effect.

6. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the task masters of the people, and their officers, *Israelites who were employed under the task masters*, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore, *to mingle with the clay, or rather, to burn the bricks with* : let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them ; ye shall not diminish [aught] thereof : for they [be] idle, *they have not work enough, and their minds wander* ; therefore they cry, saying,
- 9 Let us go [and] sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein ; and let them not regard vain words, *and what these men say unto them*.
- 10 And the task masters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get ye straw where ye can find it : yet not aught of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. And the task masters hasted [them,] saying, Fulfil your works,
- 14 [your] daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's task masters had set over them, were beaten, [and] demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as heretofore ?
- 15 Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh,* saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants ? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick : and, behold, thy servants [are] beaten ; but the fault [is] in thine own people. But he said, Ye [are] idle, [ye are] idle : therefore ye say, Let us go, [and] do sacrifice to the LORD. *This was a bitter sarcasm ; when their hearts were broken with the extremities of their labours, they are taxed with idleness. He then ratifies the command ;* Go therefore now, [and] work ; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. And the officers of the children of Israel did see [that] they [were] in evil [case,] after it was said, Ye shall not diminish [aught] from your bricks of your daily task.
- 20 And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, *waiting to know what success they had met with*, as they came forth from Pharaoh : And they said unto them, *in a violent passion*, The LORD look upon you, and judge ; because you have made our saviour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us ; *you have been the cause of increasing our burdens*

* In those days the meanest of the people had access to their prince : and their business now was to know whether it was his order or not.

and punishment. They began to suspect their divine commission, and used God's messengers in this cruel and outrageous manner.

- 22 And Moses returned unto the LORD; he betook himself to some retired place, where he might pour out and present his own, and the people's distress unto God, and said, with too much heat, Lord, wherefore hast thou [so] evil entreated this people? 23 why [is] it [that] thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all, as thou hast promised.

¶ CHAP. VI. Then the LORD, pitying the warmth and weakness of his servant, said unto Moses, *As thou canst make nothing of Pharaoh, I will take him in hand, and humble this proud prince; now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land; he who now so insolently refuses to let them go, shall even be glad to drive them out of his land, because of the terrible judgments which I shall inflict upon him.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E may observe that those who do not know God are the persons who refuse to obey him, v. 2. *And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.* While men are ignorant of God, and neglect his service, they say this, if not in words, yet by their actions. It is a sad thing to be ignorant of God: the more we know of him, the more we shall love him, and more cheerfully and steadily obey him.

2. The displeasure of God must be expected, where the known duties of his service are omitted. If we neglect his worship in public, in our families, or in secret, he will be displeased, and we must expect to meet the tokens of his anger. God is jealous of his honour, and will not suffer his creatures to neglect his work. The best security for his favour, is to walk in all his statutes and ordinances blameless.

3. God often brings his people into extremities, that he may magnify his mercy in their extraordinary deliverance. Persecutions are often most extreme, when liberty is near. Thus God manifests his power and justice over his enemies, and his favour and mercy to his friends. Deliverance is nearest when difficulties are greatest, for then their desires of deliverance are most earnest, and they put the greatest value upon it.

4. It is no new thing for worldly minded men to charge religion with idleness; *Ye are idle.* Luther tells us, he once heard a great man say, 'They must needs be idle fellows who are so

much taken up with the business of religion.' Any thing seems proper work to a carnal mind, but God's service ; nothing is superfluous to them, but religious duties ; though true religion will make a man diligent in his business. Industry is a duty which we owe to God, to our families, and to the public ; and religious duties should be so timed as not to interfere with worldly business ; and this may easily be done : but any time that is separated for religious purposes, is apt to be reckoned lost time by men of the world. Yet let such remember, that if a man be ever so diligent in worldly business, if he *rise up early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of sorrows*, and at the same time neglect religion, he will be condemned at last *as a slothful servant*.

5. How ready are men in affliction to quarrel with their best friends ! Moses and Aaron promised the Israelites deliverance, but, because it did not come at the time they expected, they were insulted and abused by them. Persons in affliction often censure their best friends ; but let us guard against this temper. Israel never needed the pity and prayers of Moses and Aaron so much, as when they were quarrelling with them and reproaching them.

6. Those whom God calls to public services must seek their comfort in him, when things wear a discouraging aspect among those to whom they are sent. The officers insulted Moses, and Moses returned to the Lord, when disappointed in his attempts of service. Thus should ministers and christian parents do ; lay the case before God, plead before him their sincere, though feeble endeavours : plead his promises, and then they may hope that in his good time things will take a more favourable turn. However, though they *labour in vain, and spend their strength for nought*, this is their comfort, that *their work is with the Lord, and their judgment with their God*.

CHAP. VI, 2; to the end.

God renews his promises to Israel by Moses ; and encourages him in his addresses to them and to Pharaoh.

2 **A**ND God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I [am]
 3 the LORD : And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name of] God Almighty, and displayed to them my great power, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them ; that is, he had displayed his Almighty power, but not his immutability and faithfulness to his promises, which the word Jehovah principally signifies. He had promised many things to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and now they shall see them accomplished, and perceive the name Jehovah was fully answered in all its import. See Isaiah lii.

4 5, 6.* And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage ; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I [am] the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, *with great power*, and with great judgments, *which I will inflict upon them* : And I will take you to me for a people, *under mine own immediate government, and you shall know and serve me, and enjoy all manner of temporal and spiritual blessings*, and I will be to you a God : and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob ; and I will give it you for an heritage ; I [am] the LORD, and therefore have authority to dispose of lands and kingdoms as I please, and will faithfully give you what I have promised.

9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel : but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage ; they could neither mind what he said, nor believe anything concerning their deliverance, judging it to be impossible.

And Moses went to the place where he used to converse with God, And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me ; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who [am] of uncircumcised lips ?† And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. *Now follows the genealogy of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi.*

14 These [be] the heads of their fathers' houses ; the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel ; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi : these [be] the families of Reuben.

15 And the sons of Simeon ; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish

* But my name Jehovah I did not make manifest to them. *Kennicott.* It appears from many passages in Genesis, and particularly from chap. xxii. 14. that the name Jehovah was known to them, though they might not understand its full import. But if we only change the pointing, and read the passage with an interrogation, it removes the difficulty ; *Did not I appear to Abraham by the name of God Almighty, and by my name Jehovah was I not known to them ?*

† Circumcision being a mark of God's people, uncircumcision was reckoned a blemish ; so that any thing which had a blemish, natural or moral, was called uncircumcised. Moses pleads, that he had a blemish or defect in his speech, and was therefore unable to speak in a prevailing manner. Nevertheless God confirmed the charge, v. 13.

woman : these [are] the families of Simeon. *Moses having just mentioned these, enlarges on the tribe or genealogy of Levi, from whom he himself was descended, and this was the more necessary, as he was a foundling.*

- 16 And these [are] the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations ; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari : and the years of the life of Levi [were] an hundred thirty and
 17 seven years. The sons of Gershon ; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families. And the sons of Kohath ; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel : and the years of the life of Kohath [were] an hundred thirty and three years.
 18 And the sons of Merari ; Mahali, and Mushi : these [are] the families of Levi according to their generations. And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister, or *kinswoman*. to wife ; and she bare him Aaron and Moses, and Miriam (*see Numb. xxvi. 59.*) and the years of the life of Amram
 19 [were] an hundred and thirty and seven years. And the sons of Izhar ; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zithri. And the sons of
 20 Uzziel ; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri. And Aaron took him Elisheba, or *Elisabeth*, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife ; and she bare him Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. And the sons of Korah ; Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph : these [are] the families of the Korhites,
 21 And Eleazar Aaron's son took him [one] of the daughters of Putiel to wife ; and she bare him Phinehas : these [are] the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their families.
 22 These [are] that Aaron and Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies, or *numerous families, which went out of Egypt, like several armies in military order, and with great*
 23 *power.* These [are] they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt : these [are] that Moses and Aaron.
 24 And it came to pass on the day [when] the LORD spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt, That the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I [am] the LORD : speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee. And Moses said before the LORD, Behold, I [am] of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me ? *Moses reports what passed between him and God, to make way for what follows in the next chapter.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HOSE who own God's dominion, and trust his all-sufficiency, shall experience his fidelity to his promises. Abraham believed him as *El Shaddai*, a God allpowerful, or all-sufficient, and also found him *ЯЗОВАН*, a faithful God, the fulfiller of his promises. He will always prove himself to be what he has declared, and will not suffer his people to be disappointed.

2. God will faithfully remember his covenant, though he may seem to forget it; though his people think he forgets it, because deliverance is delayed, yet he is *ever mindful of his promises*. Those who trust him, and wait on him, shall always find that it is indeed so.

3. God can add energy to worthless lips, and make them triumph over all opposition. Ministers are too ready to adopt the words of Moses, If Israel, to whom I am sent, will not hear, how then shall Pharaoh? If christians are perverse, haughty, and disobedient, how shall we deal with the openly profane? But God can *make his strength perfect in our weakness*; when he gives a commission, we may hope for success.

4. The afflictions of God's people may be so many, that his consolations may appear small. When their hearts are oppressed with grief and concern they see not their own comforts, and a veil is spread over the promises. This is often owing to discontent and fretfulness; and then men may thank themselves if they taste not the pleasures of religion. *It is good for a man to hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of God.* If it be long delayed, and afflictions are continued, let it be our daily prayer, *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief.*

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter the plagues of Egypt begin, which exhibit an awful instance of the power of God, and show, that when he judgeth he will overcome.

1. **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh; *clothed thee with a divine power, to represent me, to speak in my name, and my power shall be with thee:** and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet, *thy*
 2. *spokesman, a representative to my representative.*† Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother

* Moses was a God by commission; the viceroy, or deputy, to the only living and true God.

† Moses being a man of uncommon modesty, might be embarrassed in common conversation, and not have that readiness of speech which another, of far less abilities, might have.

- shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel
 3 out of his land. And, *or; nevertheless*, I will harden Pharaoh's heart, *since he hath hardened his own heart against me and Israel so long, now in judgment I will punish him for it*, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.
 4 But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, [and] my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. *These were designed on the one hand, to bring Israel out; on the other, to punish the princes and people for their barbarous treatment of Israel, for their idolatry,*
 5 *and to make them see and own Jehovah.* And the Egyptians shall know that I [am] the LORD, *and that it is in vain to contend with me*, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, to slay their firstborn, and bring out the children of Israel
 6 from among them. And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they. *An emphatical repetition, to show their courage in attempting to do and say such things to so great a monarch, in his own dominions; and their fidelity in the execution of all God's commands.*
 7 And Moses [was] fourscore years old,* and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.
 8 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
 9 When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle for you, *that I may know you are sent of God* :† then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast [it] before Pharaoh, [and] it shall become a serpent.‡ And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded : and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men, *or philosophers*, and the sorcerers : now the magicians of Egypt,|| they also did in like manner with their enchantments. *God suffered them to do so, either in reality, or by some deception, that Pharaoh's heart being hardened, he might make his plagues wonderful; and that Moses*
 12 *might triumph over them at last.* For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents : but Aaron's rod, the dragon into which his rod was turned, swallowed up their

* The age of Moses is taken notice of, to show that he had now a venerable aspect, which would command reverence; that he had great experience, which rendered him fit for the troublesome scenes he was to engage in; and that he would not be so apt to invent things, and be under the power of fancy, as younger persons would be. We may observe here, that all the plagues of Egypt did not last more than one year; he was now eighty, he died at one hundred and twenty, and they were forty years in the wilderness.

† It was agreeable to the common sense of mankind, to expect, that if God had sent a person on an extraordinary embassy, he should work a miracle, to prove his divine mission.

‡ A large dragon or crocodile, to intimate, that he would make the rod of Moses a terrible scourge. This emblem was exceeding proper among a people who dealt so much in hieroglyphics.

|| These were persons who pretended to have commerce with demons or evil spirits; the Apostle Paul calls them *Jannes* and *Jambres*, 2 Tim. iii. 8.

- rods ; to show that the power whereby Moses and Aaron had wrought their miracles, was far above that, whereby the magicians had wrought theirs, and was also an emblem of their power being destroyed. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them ;* as the LORD had said, *chap. iv. 21.*
- 14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart [is]
 15 hardened, he refuseth to let the people go. Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning ; lo, he goeth out unto the water : and thou shalt stand by the river's brink against he come :† and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in
 16 thine hand, to strike Pharaoh's mind more powerfully. And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness : and, behold, hitherto thou wouldst not hear. *It was a great mercy in God to send such*
 17 *a message, after he had been so obstinate and hardened.* Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I [am] the LORD : behold, I will smite with the rod that [is] in mine hand upon the waters which [are] in the river,‡ and they.
 18 shall be turned to blood. And the fish that [is] in the river shall die, and the river shall stink ; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink of the water of the river.||
- 19 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood ; and [that] there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in [vessels of] wood, and in [vessels of] stone.
- 20 And Moses and Aaron did so as the LORD commanded ; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that [were] in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants ; and all the waters that [were] in the river, were turned to blood.
- 21 And the fish that [was] in the river died ; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river : and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.
- 22 And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments, in some other places where the water was not changed ; but this only increased their plague, and made Pt ~~with~~ the

* The Hebrew is, *And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened*, as in v. 22. This was one of the methods of God's providence, against which Pharaoh hardened himself, and it was suffered as a judgment to him.

† Moses was probably forbid the court, and therefore God ordered him to meet Pharaoh at the river, where he went in the morning to worship it, as was their custom.

‡ This is a remarkable form of speech. Moses was as a God to Pharaoh : he speaks as Jehovah, *I will smite the waters which are in the river*, a branch of the Nile, or a cut from it, to water their ground, and fill their pools.

|| How righteous and terrible was this judgment ! Here they had murdered the Hebrew children, and now, they have blood to drink ; their chief dignities were destroyed, and they were made to loathe that which they worshipped as a God.

more obstinate ; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither
 23 *did he hearken unto them ; as the LORD had said. And*
Pharaoh turned and went into his house, neither did he set
his heart to this also ; his proud heart regarded not, nor was
 24 *properly affected with it. And all the Egyptians digged round*
about the river for water to drink ; for they could not drink
of the water of the river ; and they probably found some small
 25 *quantity for their present necessity. And seven days were*
fulfilled, after that the LORD had smitten the river : But dur-
ing this time, Pharaoh was not humbled ; and after this, God
probably removed that plague to make way for another.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us adore the almighty power of God in this remarkable change. He turns water into blood, and inanimate into living bodies, and changes them again. How wonderful is his power ! and what madness is it for any, even the greatest men, to contend with him !

2. God knows how to overrule the hardness and obstinacy of men's hearts, to serve the purposes of his own glory. He overruled Pharaoh's obstinacy, that he might make himself known to Israel, as *the faithful God* ; to Egypt, as *the only true God* ; the almighty, irresistible King ; and to make way for the deliverance of Israel : thus he *causeth the wrath* and the pride of man *to praise him*.

3. God foresees the excuses sinners will make, and provides a proper answer to them. Pharaoh will say, *Show me a miracle*. Sinners will plead in their own excuse, what they retain in their hearts ; but God directs his ambassadors to give proper replies. He has in his word furnished answers to these pleas ; and it is the business of ministers to study that word, and human nature too, that they may know how to discharge their duty.

4. God sometimes honours the advanced age of his servants with distinguished usefulness. Thus he did with regard to Moses and Aaron, when they perhaps began to think their days of service over ; thus he puts an honour upon aged piety. *Days shall speak, and multitude of years shall teach knowledge*. When God is pleased to preserve the senses and memory, aged christians should be willing to be employed for God ; *showing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done*.

5. Sinners are but hurting themselves, when rebelling against the divine revelation and command. Pharaoh, by his obstinacy, only made his plagues more wonderful : he had better have submitted at once. He thought his magicians could do wonders, and would not let Israel go, even when he saw the magicians overpowered. God's hand will be stretched out till the sinner is

humbled ; for none ever hardened himself against God, and prospered.

6. God, in the midst of judgment, remembers mercy : during the seven days while the water was turned into blood, some water was to be found by digging pits. He does not let forth all his wrath, but has compassion for a people, while he punishes them for their sins. And has he such compassion for his enemies ? happy then are all his friends ; *blessed are all they that put their trust in him !*

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter we have an account of three more plagues, the frogs, the lice, and the flies,

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let [them] go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs :
- 2 And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-
- 3 troughs : And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants. *Moses gives him fair warning, tells him what the plague shall be, and how dreadful to himself and all his people ; but he still hardened his heart.*
- 4 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon
- 5 the land of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt ; and the frogs came up in immense
- 6 quantities, and covered the land of Egypt.* And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt. *God suffered them to do this ; but they were not able to destroy them, nor send them away.†*
- 7 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, entreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people ; and I will let the people go, that
- 8 they may do sacrifice unto the LORD. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me : when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs

* This was a sad plague, as it was constant and general. The creatures were offensive to the sight and smell, made a very disagreeable noise, came upon their persons, hindered their baking, and made their food loathsome. It was a plague that fell heavier on Pharaoh than the former. *Psalm cv. 30. they came in abundance to the chambers of the king : No art could destroy them, or keep them out.*

† At Pharaoh's command, they practised some of their divinations, and God gave them success, contrary to their own expectations. Thus they increased the plague and hardened Pharaoh, but could not remove the frogs.

- from thee and thy houses, [that] they may remain in the river only ? *As if he had said, Prescribe your own time when it shall be done, that you may know it is the mighty work of God, and not by chance, or any natural means, that the frogs are*
- 10 *destroyed.* And he said, Tomorrow. *He was so loth to be beholden to God or Moses, that he chose rather to endure the plague till next day, to see whether it might not go away of itself.* And he said, [Be it] according to thy word : that thou mayest know, that [there is] none like unto the LORD our God.
- 11 And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people ; they shall
- 12 remain in the river only. And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh : and Moses cried unto the LORD because of
- 13 the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses ; and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.
- 14 And they gathered them together upon heaps : and the land
- 15 stank. *This was a further rebuke to the Egyptians.* But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had said.
- 16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may be-
- 17 come lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so ; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast ; all the dust of the land, *that is, the dust in every part of the land,* became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. *Here was no warning given, because Pharaoh had been perfidious,*
- 18 *and dealt treacherously.* And the magicians did so with their enchantments, to bring forth lice, *that is, smote the dust, as Aaron had done,* but they could not : so there were lice upon
- 19 man and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This [is] the finger of God, *the immediate power and work of God :** and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had said ; *therefore this plague seems to have been continued on man and beast.*
- 20 And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh ; lo, he cometh forth to the water ; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let
- 21 my people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms [of flies] *mixed swarms of hornets, wasps, gnats, and all kinds of troublesome flies, (Psa. lxxviii. 45.)* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses : and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms [of flies,].

* There was nothing more difficult in the producing lice than frogs, but God here frustrated their counsellors, and made their diviners mad. Now the magicians owed a divine power was present, and that it was above all the power of enchantment to do this thing ; they probably referred to the other miracles as well as to this. It might have been expected that Pharaoh would now have relented, but he did not.

- 22 and also the ground whereon they [are.] And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms [of flies] shall be there ; *This was surprising ; for the air was open, and their motion swift ; there were much cattle and good food for insects there ; but none could pass the bounds which God had prescribed to them ; I will do thus, to the end thou mayest know that I [am] the LORD in the midst of the earth, and have the whole creation at my command.**
- 23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be. *He fixes the time, to show that he had a divine commission ; to give Pharaoh space to repent ; and convince him that it was not owing to any natural causes.*
- 24 And the LORD did so ; and there came a grievous swarm [of flies] into the house of Pharaoh, and [into] his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt : the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm [of flies ;] *the air was infected, and many of the people poisoned or stung by them. Psalm lxxviii. 45.*
- 25 And Pharaoh began to relent, and he called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land ; *you may sacrifice to your God, but not go out of this land to do it.*
- 26 And Moses gave a remarkable reason why they could not do so, and said, It is not meet so to do ; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God, *those animals which you worship as idols, and thus make them an abomination :* lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us ?† We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he shall command us. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness ; only you shall not go very far away :
- 29 entreat for me. And Moses, *having gained his consent so far, agreed to intercede for him, and said,* Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the LORD that the swarms [of flies] may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow : but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD, *since the same almighty power can bring even worse plagues than these.* And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated
- 31 the LORD. And the LORD did according to the word of Moses ; and he removed the swarms [of flies] from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people ; there remained not
- 32 one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, *continued obdurate, neither would he let the people go, notwithstanding the promise he had made, and the warning he had received from Moses only the day before.*

* The rod of Moses was not used in this instance ; God showed that there was no virtue in the rod, and that he was not confined to any particular mode of operation.

† There was no law for doing this, but they would do it in a popular fury. A woman in Egypt once killed a cat inadvertently, upon which the people tumultuously met together, beset the house, and killed the man, in spite of the king and princes who endeavoured to prevent it. This story illustrates what Moses here says.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E may learn hence, the uncontrolled power of God over the creatures. *He doeth according to his will, makes them instruments of mercy, or judgment. See what power he gave to Moses, and to the magicians ; and when he pleased he restrained it. He is the great God, and of great power ; his understanding is infinite. He overrules various orders of beings ; holds infernal spirits in his chains, and restraineth them when he pleaseth, as easily as he does a frog or a fly. Who would not reverence so glorious a Being !*

2. See by what contemptible instruments God can scourge the proudest enemies : how easily he can bring swarms of frogs, lice, and flies ; and thus cast contempt upon princes. God hisseth for the flies and other animals, he calls them forth with infinite ease ; they are all at his control. How much reason have we to fear before him, who can make such small, despicable creatures, the instruments of terrible vengeance ! who can make them trample upon, and conquer the mightiest of the sons of men ! Herod was destroyed by them ; so were some other emperors and princes, of whom we read in history. Let all worship and reverence the King of kings, against whom none can prevail.

3. See what an honour God puts upon prayer, in that he made it the means of delivering Egypt. Moses cried unto the Lord, and entreated him, and he heard. Moses compassionately prayed for this tyrannical prince, and God chose to communicate his mercies in this way. He would have men pray always ; and delights to see his servants sensible of their dependance upon him.

4. Professions of repentance are little to be regarded, when they are extorted by divine judgments. This is an awful truth, remarkably illustrated in Pharaoh. When the judgment was removed, he forgot his promise ; when the rod was gone, the conviction was gone, and he repented of his repentance. In afflictions men will seek God early, and promise, and vow ; but such impressions too frequently wear off : when there is not a principle of religion in their souls, they will come to nothing. If the goodness of God does not lead men to repentance, his judgments seldom do it. ' The disposition of the heart must be changed (as Mr. HENRY observes) by divine grace, or else, what melts in the sun, will freeze in the shade.' Thus the prophet observes, *Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness : in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord, Isa. xxvi. 10. When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired early after God. Psalm lxxviii. 34.* This shows how careful and serious we should be in making engagements, lest we add treachery and deceit to our other crimes, as Pharaoh did.

5. How easily can God preserve his people in times of general calamity ! He directs the motion of the meanest creatures, or insects ; and when he makes the plagues of a sinful people wonderful, he will hide his servants in the day of his anger. *He knoweth them that are his*, and will protect them, generally in this world, always in another. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of those whose heart is perfect toward him.*

CHAP. IX.

This chapter contains an account of the mortality among the cattle ; of the boils and blains ; and of the storms of hail ; which were the fifth, sixth, and seventh plagues of Egypt.

- 1 **T**HEN the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews,
 2 Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse
 3 to let [them] go, and wilt hold them still, Behold, the hand of the LORD, *the extraordinary, immediate power of God, without any human means, (as ch. viii. 24.)* is upon thy cattle which [is] in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep, *(which they kept for their milk and other uses, though not to kill, ch. viii. 26.)*
 4 [there shall be] a very grievous murrain. And the LORD shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt : and there shall nothing die of all [that is] the children's of Israel. And the LORD appointed a set time, saying, Tomorrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land. And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, *the plague was sent as God had threatened*, and all the cattle of Egypt died ; *some of all sorts, for some were afterward destroyed by the hail. This showed the vanity of their idolatry, for they worshipped some of these cattle as gods :* but of the cattle of the children of Israel died
 7 not one. And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. *This was indeed wonderful, since they breathed the same air, and drank the same water as the Egyptian cattle.* And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go, *notwithstanding this remarkable providence in their favour.**
 8 And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace,† and let Moses sprinkle

* A Roman historian wonders, why man should be esteemed the wisest of creatures, for no creature acts so foolishly ; other creatures, when they have smarted once, will beware for the future. Man only is not weary of sinning, but repeats it, though he smart for it. This was remarkably the case with the king of Egypt.

† As they oppressed the Israelites with furnace work in burning of brick, so now they are punished with burning sores, which came from ashes taken out of the furnace.

- it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh ; *to note that this judgment came upon them in a special manner from God.* And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth [with] blains, *or a burning kind of ulcers, which were incurable, (Deut. xxviii. 27.)* upon man and
 10 upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh ; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven ; and it became a boil breaking forth [with] blains upon man, and upon beast : *the affliction*
 11 *now came on their bodies.* And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils ;* for the boil was upon the
 12 magicians, and upon all the Egyptians. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, *gave him up to the corruptions of his own heart,* and he hearkened not unto them ; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.
 13 And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may
 14 serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues, *which I intended upon thine heart; they shall sting thee to the heart,* and upon thy servants, and upon thy people ; that thou mayest know that [there is] none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence ; and thou shalt be cut off from
 16 the earth.† And in very deed for this [cause] have I raised thee up, *made thee king, and spared thy life,* for to show [in] thee my power ; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth ; *that the glory of my justice, power, and severity, may be made more illustrious before all the world, as a*
 17 *warning to incorrigible sinners.* As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go ? Behold, *I again solemnly warn thee, that tomorrow about this time I*
 18 *will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof, even until now.*
 19 Send therefore now, [and] gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field ; [for upon] every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die. *Thus God mixed mercy with judgment, gave them an opportunity of saving their cattle, and some were so wise as to improve it ;*
 20 He that feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses :
 21 And he that regarded not the word of the LORD left his ser-

* Till this time they continued with Pharaoh, probably endeavouring to harden his heart, and to persuade him it was all done by magic, and that they should overcome Moses at last ; but now they retreated, and we hear no more of them. *Their folly was manifest to all men.* See 2 Tim. iii. 9.

† It might be better rendered, *I have stretched out my hand to smite thee, and thou hadst been before this cut off,* that is, were it not to display my justice, &c. as it follows in v. 16.

- vaits and his cattle in the field, and thus bid defiance to God and to Moses:
- 32 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail, *not only in local showers, which is commonly the case with hail, storms, but in all the land of Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt. This would be the more remarkable, as hail and rain were uncommon in Egypt; and the more dreadful, as it would destroy the grass*
- 33 *and herbs, and fruits of the earth.* And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and the LORD sent thunder and lightning, and hail, and the balls of fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of
- 34 Egypt, *but the land of Goshen was free from it.* So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became
- 35 a nation. And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that [was] in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field and brake every tree of
- 36 the field. Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel [were,] was there no hail.
- 37 And Pharaoh sent *in great haste,* and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD [is] righteous, and I and my people [are] wicked. *This acknowledgment and submission was very just; but it only proceeded from fear, and had no effect on his obstinate heart.*
- 38 Entreat the LORD (for it is enough) *I will not provoke him to inflict any more plagues upon me; those which have been already inflicted shall suffice for your dismissal; entreat him that there be no [more] mighty thunderings and hail; and I*
- 39 *will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer.* And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD; [and] the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth [is] the LORD's, *and that he can*
- 40 *send or remove judgments when he pleases.* But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.
- 41 And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley [was] in the ear, and the flax [was] balled, *the head began to*
- 42 *appear above the stalk.* But the wheat and the rye were not
- 43 smitten: for they [were] not grown up. And Moses, *calm and secure amidst all the storm,* went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth. *Thus Moses prevailed with God to remove the judgment, but could not prevail with Pharaoh to keep his word.*
- 44 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his

35 heart; he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn how immutable God is in his demands, *v.* 1. *Go to Pharaoh and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.* The same message is to be delivered; he will not take up with any thing but an exact compliance. He makes the same demand on sinners, sends the same message, time after time; *Repent and be converted; except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.* Men must come to God's terms, he will not stoop to theirs. *To-day then, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*

2. Who would not fear so awful a God as this is? This is a lesson to all succeeding generations, and shows *what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.* Fire, hail, thunder, and storms, fulfil his word; he has stores of vengeance in the skies; he can meet sinners, abroad or at home; afflict them in their bodies, or in their cattle; afflict them in time, and eternity. God directs his arrows against tyrants and persecutors; if one plague will not humble them, he will send another. How easily can he destroy the beasts of the field, send murrain through a land, that shall take away the most valuable and useful creatures! In the sickness and death of cattle we are to observe the hand of God. He knows how to separate between the cattle of the righteous, and the cattle of the wicked, *for he is the preserver both of man and beast.* It is by the wickedness of the land that the beasts are consumed; and when this is the case it becomes us to *humble ourselves under God's mighty hand.*

3. We may observe to what a wretched degree the heart of man is capable of being hardened. All Pharaoh's excuses were gone; the magicians were confounded; a distinction is made between the Israelites and the Egyptians; he knew all this, and yet *hardened his heart.* Could one have thought that the human mind was capable of such impenitence? Let us *keep our hearts with all diligence, and provoke one another to love and to good works, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

4. We may see the happiness of fearing the word of the Lord, and recollect with pleasure that there were some who did so in Pharaoh's court. Some of his courtiers were affected with God's hand, obeyed his word, and he saved their cattle; probably they escaped the rest of the plagues. Let us submit our hearts to the word of the Lord, that we may be under the care of his Providence; for it is promised, *Isa. xxxii. 18. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places; when it shall hail, coming down on the forest, and the city shall be low in a low place.*

5. Let us observe how mysterious the conduct of Providence is, and not judge of good or evil by any thing under the sun. That such a proud, oppressive man, should be raised to be king over this rich, populous, and fruitful country ; that when so many of his subjects died by one plague or another, he should be spared : but God intended to make him a signal monument of his wrath. This may be the case of many who are the terror and plague of the nations on earth : God has vengeance in store for them ; *he is whetting his glittering sword, and making ready his bow.* Sometimes calamities are a favour to the world ; and what appears a favour (as in the case of Pharaoh being spared) is a judgment and a punishment. We must take things in their connections ; be cautious in our censures, especially of the dispensations of Providence, and *judge nothing before the time.* The language of such dispensations is, *that God is great, and greatly to be feared ; and that when he judgeth he will overcome.*

CHAP. X.

Contains an account of the eighth and ninth plagues of Egypt, the locusts and the darkness. Woe unto him who striveth with his Maker.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh ; for, *or though,* I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs
- 2 before him : And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them ; *that it may be a lesson to all the succeeding generations of the children of Israel ;* that ye may know how that I [am] the LORD, *that ye may know the power of God over all creatures and elements, and his goodness to Israel.*
- 3 And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me ? *This pointed question was now proper, considering all that had been done, and to how little effect :* let my people go, that they may serve
- 4 me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast : *these were very large, terrible, and devouring creatures, the like to*
- 5 *which are never seen in this country :* And they shall cover the face of the earth, *(the original is, the eye of the earth, that is, the sun,)* that one cannot be able to see the earth : and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which
- 6 groweth for you out of the field : And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of

all the Egyptians ; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day, *for number, size, and mischievous effects.* And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

- 7 And Pharaoh's servants, *the nobles and counsellors of Egypt,* said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare, a means of destruction, unto us ? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God : knowest thou not yet that Egypt is, *in a great measure, destroyed ? This was good advice, and had he taken it, it would have prevented that mortification which he*
- 8 *afterward suffered.* And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh : and he said unto them, Go, serve the
- 9 LORD your God : [but] who [are] they that shall go ? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go ; for we [must hold] a feast unto the LORD : *it is to be a feast upon a sacrifice, therefore the beasts must go*
- 10 *for sacrifice and food, and all our families must attend.* And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones ; *this was a kind of imprecation, I wish you may be no more secure of the favour of God, than you are of my letting you go ; look [to it ;] for evil [is] before you, you have a seditious design, and I will make you smart for it.*
- 11 Not so, *your wives and children shall not go :* go now ye [that are] men, and serve the LORD ; for that ye did desire ; *this was false, for there was no such limitation made in any of their requests. And before Moses could make a reply, they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence, perhaps with violence, by some of his officers.*
- 12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land,
- 13 [even] all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt ; and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all [that] night ; [and] when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts
- 14 *from Arabia.** And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt : very grievous [were they ;] before them there were no such locusts as they,
- 15 neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened : and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left : and there remained not any green

* This is no unusual plague in Arabia and Africa ; where, when the harvest is ripe, they frequently come in vast numbers, and eat up all the corn. What they do not destroy, they spoil, and then die and breed infectious.

thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.*

- 16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste ; and he said, I have sinned against the LORD your God, *by contemning his works, by refusing his demand, and breaking my promise*, and against you Israelites in general, *by your cruel bondage ; and against you Moses and Aaron in particular, by a denial of*
- 17 *your just requests, and my scornful dealings with you.* Now therefore, *cease to punish me any further*, forgive, I pray thee, my sin, only this once, *if ever I trespass again in this kind, pray for me no more ;* and entreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only, *this deadly plague.*
- 18 And he went out from Pharaoh, and entreated the LORD.
- 19 And the LORD turned a mighty strong west wind, which came from the Mediterranean sea, and took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea ; *he fixed them there, as the word signifies ; had they died on the land, they would probably have produced the plague ;†* there remained not one locust in all the
- 20 coast of Egypt. But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go ; *all his repentance went away with the locusts.*
- 21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness [which] may be felt ; *or, as in the Hebrew, that one may feel darkness ; the air being so thickened*
- 22 *with gross mists and vapours that it might be felt.* And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days, *which shut out all the rays of the sun, and put out all their lamps and fires ;* and
- 23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days : but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings, *so that they might have gone away with all they had ; but God would have them march out like triumphant conquerors, and not go out like fugitives.*
- 24 And Pharaoh, *roused by this plague,* called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the LORD ; only let your flocks and your
- 25 herds be stayed ; let your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, *with a becoming dignity and spirit, suitable to his character,* Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the LORD our God. Our
- 26 cattle also shall go with us ; there shall not an hoof be left

* Natural historians give us a terrible account of their size, and the numbers in which they come : they are something like grasshoppers, but much larger, sometimes six or seven inches long. They darken the heavens where they come ; breed a famine in a night ; fill up the highways, so that they cannot be passed ; and break down large arms of trees on which they lodge. See a beautiful description of this calamity, *José* ii. at the beginning. See also *Theophrastus* ; *Travels*, P. i. p. 12.

† *Homer* speaks of the wind sweeping away locusts into the water ; and *Pliny* speaks of a wind that was useful to Egypt, by carrying locusts into this sea ; which was called the Red Sea, from the abundance of reddish reeds, or bulrushes, which grew on its bank, or at its bottom.

behind, *not the smallest thing to tempt us to turn back again ;* for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God ; and we know not with what we must serve the LORD, until we come thither, *what solemn and extraordinary sacrifices will be required.*

- 27 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go ; *he did not permit Pharaoh to comply with this*
 28 *motion, but suffered him to go on in his obstinacy.* And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more : for in [that] day thou seest my face thou shalt die. *Strange, that he should threaten a person with death who had done such miracles, and might strike him dead on*
 29 *the spot !* And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, or right ; *so it shall come to pass : as thou hast warned me, I assure thee in the name of God, that thou shalt see me no more, either to beg my prayers, or be helped out of thy troubles by my means ; I will see thy face again no more.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see the folly of refusing to humble ourselves before God. Our message to every sinner is the same as that of Moses to Pharaoh, *How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself ?* and this is a just description of the nature of true repentance. Men are exhorted and besought to do this ; and it is highly fit and reasonable that creatures who have offended should humble themselves, acknowledge God's righteousness, and own their distress, and with humility entreat his favour. God expects this from all men, for *all have sinned* : the greatest are not exempted ; he insists upon it, that they reverence and bow down before him. For neglecting this, Belshazzar was punished : and all those who lift themselves up against God, who act proudly and arrogantly, shall soon be brought low. Remember, it is not sufficient that we show external reverence to God ; unless the heart be humble, and our dispositions be sincere and contrite, it will be so far from securing us, that it will make our case worse, and our plagues the more wonderful.

2. We see the inefficacy of partial reformation, and a partial compliance with the commands of God. Pharaoh offers some terms, but will not come up to God's requirements. He never yields God his whole demands, but, as Bp. HALL expresses it, 'dodges like some hard chapman.' First, Israel shall not go. Then, they may sacrifice, but it shall be in Egypt. Then, in the wilderness, but not far off. He would then allow the men, and then the children, but not the cattle. In this manner do sinners trifle with the almighty and everlasting God : when his word and their own consciences alarm them, they will part with one last, and then another, that which they can spare with least reluctance,

and are least profited by ; but still they have some foolish reserve, they have some favourite passion, that they will indulge : they will not part with every lust, nor give up their whole heart to God. Thus Herod heard John gladly, and did some things. This is a foolish and absurd conduct ; for there is no treating with God, without surrendering at discretion. If we would be accepted of him, we must esteem his precepts concerning all things to be right, and hate every false way.

3. See the vanity of confessing sin, when it is not reformed. Pharaoh acknowledges his sin, prays that he may be forgiven, and desires Moses to intercede for him : but at the same time was hardening his heart. He prays to be forgiven this once, which implies a promise that he would offend no more : but all this was the effect of a fright ; he had no serious meaning in it. Thus sinners, when greatly terrified, think of repenting, and perhaps call upon God for mercy, entreat the prayers of others, and promise how holy and obedient they will be ; while their hearts continue the same ; and they are deceiving themselves, while attempting to mock God. Such unhappy persons sin against the convictions of their own minds ; and their hearts grow harder, by every instance in which the word or providence of God seems to soften them, while they continue impenitent and unreformed. Let us guard against such a mistake as this. It is in vain to confess sin, and express our shame and grief on account of it, while we do not utterly forsake it. Remember how that promise is expressed, *He that confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy.*

4. The state of the Egyptians and Israelites during the plague of darkness, is a lively emblem of the different condition of saints and sinners. Darkness overshadowed the Egyptians ; a terrible emblem of that darkness of mind in which sinners are involved : they are surrounded with spiritual darkness ; the god of this world hath blinded their eyes. But saints are children of light ; they were once darkness, but are made light in the Lord ; they walk in his light. How happy the condition of the Israel of God, of all upright souls, to whom there ariseth light in the thickest darkness. Thus it is said in *Isa. lx. 1, 2.* (in which there is probably an allusion to the story before us) *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people ; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.* Sinners shall be banished to a state of everlasting darkness ; for them there is reserved blackness of darkness for ever, But light is sown for the righteous ; they shall be advanced to a world, where the sun shall no more be their light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto them, but the Lord shall be unto them an everlasting light, and their God, their glory. And he shall lead them to fountains of living water, and wipe away all tears from

their eyes. And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick ; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

5. See the goodness of God, in the complete redemption of Israel, *not a hoof was left behind.* He that has begun deliverance, will complete it. But there is a nobler salvation, which God hath in reserve for his people, and he will complete and perfect that also. He will not lose the meanest of his servants, nor suffer one to remain under the power and tyranny of the god of this world. Nay, he will not lose the meanest part of this mortal body ; every part of the stamina, or principles of it, shall be raised from the bondage of corruption ; he will swallow up death in victory ; and give all his people a full release from the power of the enemy. The history afterward shows, that the words of Moses were made good ; and we have the assurance of a faithful God, that the deliverance and salvation of all his servants shall also be complete ; and when he gathers his saints together out of this lower world, to bring them to the land that he hath promised, not one shall be left behind. *Faithful is he that hath promised, who will also do it ; not one tittle of his word shall fail to be accomplished.*

CHAP. XI.

In the conclusion of the last chapter, Moses said to Pharaoh, ' I will see thy face again no more.' It is generally thought, that before he went out he threatened the last plague ; if so, the three first verses of this chapter must be in a parenthesis. But perhaps Pharaoh, contrary to his resolution, sent for Moses again ; as it is plain he did, after the firstborn were slain.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, Yet, will I bring one plague [more] upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt ; afterward he will let you go hence : when he shall let [you] go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether ; *he shall be glad to get rid of you, even by force.* Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.* And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses [was] very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people. *This was the reason why the courtiers did not meddle with Moses, and why the*

* Many objections have been made to this conduct of Moses, and many commentators, and others, have endeavoured to vindicate it, but have done it very indifferently. The truth is, the Hebrew word *Shaal* does not signify to borrow, but to ask one to give, as Psalm ii 8. *ask of me, &c.* God here said, Ask of, or request your neighbours to give you such things, and I will dispose their minds to show you favour ; and so he did, v. 3. See ch. iii. 22.

Egyptians so readily granted the requests of the Israelites.

- 4 And Moses said to Pharaoh, *before he went out of his presence, (compare v. 8. with ch. x. 29.)* Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, *will manifest my power in an eminent manner, without using thy rod,*
- 5 *or any other instrument :* And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, *his son and successor,* even unto the firstborn of the maid servant that [is] behind the mill, *the meanest*
- 6 *slave ;* and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was
- 7 none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast, *they shall not have the least disturbance :* that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference
- 8 between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants, *who are now ready to drive me from thy presence,* shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee, *that put themselves under thy conduct and command :* and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh, *who was in a great anger, or rage against Moses, because of this threatening.**
- 9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you ; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. *God being determined to punish him further, in righteous judgment suffered him to continue in his obstinate fury.*
- 10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh : and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land, *till he was forced to it by the death of the firstborn.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E may observe, that to fear and reverence God, is the way to be feared and revered by the worst of men ; v. 3. *Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.* He was beloved of God, and revered by man. When God's servants act from religious principles, and evidence to the world their regard for God, men cannot but have an esteem for them : bad as the world is, wicked men will always have a secret reverence for the righteous. Let us, therefore, fear and honour God, and keep his charge ; and thus shall we have *favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

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* See this sense established in Shuckford's Con. vol. II. p. 336.

2. What reverence do we owe to that God, in whose hand our breath is ? How easily can he cut off the spirits of men ; the spirits of princes, the greatest of men, are in his hand. He knew how to separate the firstborn in all the families of Egypt to destruction. Who would not fear so awful a Being, and reverence him, as the preserver of man and beast ?

3. Let us be solicitous to be found among God's people, that we may escape the plagues which he brings upon the wicked. The Lord puts a difference between them, oftentimes in this world, and preserves them from the noisome pestilence : but when the day cometh that *shall burn as an oven*, it shall put a still greater difference between *him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not. The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God ; sudden destruction shall come upon them.* But those who fear the Lord, he will hide in the day of his anger, and fix in a state of everlasting tranquillity and repose ; *there remaineth a rest for the people of God.*

4. What a melancholy instance have we of an impotent, obstinate rage in Pharaoh. After having suffered so much, it might have been expected that he would have been mollified and humbled ; instead of this, he *hardens his heart*, and rages against Moses. This is too often the case of wicked men : they grow hardened by their afflictions. When God's messengers give them warning, set before them the terrors of the Lord, and point out the threatenings of his word, they grow angry at the messengers ; ministers become their enemies by telling them the truth. But whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, whether they will bear it patiently, or let their passions rage, the message must be delivered, as we would deliver our own souls. God approves the zeal and fidelity of his servants, however men may despise or be offended at them. Let men rage ever so much, and stand out ever so long, God will humble them at last. *His counsel shall stand ; and his ministers shall be a sweet savour in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved.*

CHAP. XII. 1—28.

God had promised to Abraham, in Gen. xv. 13, 14, 'Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance;' in this chapter we have the fulfilment of that prophecy.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land
- 2 of Egypt, saying, This month *Abib* [shall be] unto you the beginning of months: it [shall be] the first month of the year to you.*
- 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth [day] of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of [their] fathers, a lamb for
- 4 an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, too few to eat it at one meal, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take [it] according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb; every master of a family shall compute how much his family useth to eat, and shall take such a share of the lamb as may suffice them.
- 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish; intimating that God must be served with the best; a male of the first year, or, about a year old; ye shall take [it] out from the sheep, or
- 6 from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening; the Hebrew signifies, between the two evenings, between three o'clock and sunset.†
- 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike [it] on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it; not on the threshold, lest it should be profaned, as trampling upon any thing was reckoned to do.
- 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night‡ following the fourteenth, and beginning the fifteenth day, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it.
- 9 This was to remind them of their bitter bondage in Egypt. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast [with] fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof,

* Thus the beginning of their year was changed; it was before this command in the middle of September, but now in the middle of March. Hence in all reckonings of the months in scripture, where they are numerically named, this is counted the first, and the others as they lie in order from this.

† Every master of an house was to kill it in the presence of his whole family, which made him a priest in his house; but afterward it was restrained to the priests only.

‡ The lamb was killed on the fourteenth day in the evening, that is, after three o'clock, as 6. but was eaten that night, which was the beginning of the fifteenth day.

- 10 *all the entrails that are proper for food. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning, for any superstitious use ; like some of the ancient idolaters, who preserved some part of the sacrifices for superstitious purposes ; but ye shall entirely consume yours : and that which remaineth of it until the*
- 11 *morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it at this time ; [with] your loins girded, your long garments tied up, your shoes on your feet, as a sign and token of your liberty, (for slaves always went barefoot,) and your staff in your hand ; and ye shall eat it in haste ; like persons on the point of departing : it [is] the LORD's passover ; that is, a sign of his passing over you and your houses, when he comes to destroy the Egyptians.*
- 12 *For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment :** I [am] the LORD. *And the blood which shall be sprinkled on the door posts shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye [are ;] not to direct the destroying angel, but to confirm your faith and hope : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to*
- 14 *destroy [you,] when I smite the land of Egypt.† And this day shall be unto you for a memorial of this deliverance from Egypt, and a type of your redemption by Christ ; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations, as a time of rejoicing for your deliverance : ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever, every year, all the days of your life, or rather, till the coming of Christ who is our passover, 1 Cor. v, 7, 8.*
- 15 *Seven days after the passover shall ye eat unleavened bread ; even the first day after the passover ye shall put away leaven out of your houses :‡ for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel, be excommunicated, or cut off by the hand of God, as a rebel against him ; as one who hath renounced his religion and his covenant. And in the first day [there shall be] an holy convocation, a solemn day of public worship, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you ; no manner of work shall be done in them, save [that] which*
- 17 *every man must eat, that only may be done of you.|| And ye*

* This was designed to show them the vanity of idols and to confirm their faith in the God of Israel. An heathen writer says, that an earthquake threw down their temples also.

† Epiphanius tells us, that the Egyptians used at this time of the year to mark their cattle, trees, and one another, with red ochre, which they fancied to be a preservative from death ; it probably took its rise from hence.

‡ This was to be a memorial of their speedy departure out of Egypt, when they had not time to leaven their bread.

|| On the first of these holy days their deliverance was begun, by the death of the first-born of Egypt ; and on the last of them their deliverance was completed, by the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the sea.

- shall observe [the feast of] unleavened bread : for in this self-same day have I *by my angel* brought your armies, *all your tribes, like a triumphant army*, out of the land of Egypt : therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first [month,] on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses : for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, *that is, a proselyte*, or one born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened ; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.
- 21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, *to give them the directions he had received from God*, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover, *that is, the lamb appointed for a memorial*.
- 22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip [it] in the blood that [is] in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts, with the blood that [is] in the bason ; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians ; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite [you.*] And ye shall observe this thing, *this commandment of the passover, but not all these rites and ceremonies of it*,
- 23 for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service, *and instruct your children and household* in the nature and design of it. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service ? That ye shall say, It [is] the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped God, *in token of their thankful acknowledgment of his favour, and cheerful submission to his command and ordinance*.
- 28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

* God could have distinguished them without this blood, and preserved them if they had gone out ; but it was his own appointed method for their safety, and had they neglected it, they would have been justly destroyed. Thus it is said, *Neb. xl. 28. Through faith he, that is, Moses, kept the passover and sprinkling of blood, that is, through faith in God's declaration, and in this condition of their preservation.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be thankful that Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. He is the Lamb of God, without blemish and without spot. Let us rejoice in his sacrifice. The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus was designed to purge our consciences, and so save us from the wrath to come.

2. Let us keep the christian feast in a gospel manner ; *not with the leaven of malice and wickedness*, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity ; mingling sincere repentance with our joy ; *and whatever we do, do it heartily as unto the Lord.*

3. Let us do what we can to transmit the memory of this transaction from generation to generation. If it was reasonable for the Israelites to teach their children the meaning of the passover, much more should we teach ours the nature and design of gospel ordinances. Children should ask parents the meaning of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; and parents should labour to understand them, and be careful to explain them, and do it frequently, that they may know the obligations they are under, and be brought to *join themselves to the Lord in the bonds of an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten.*

CHAP. XII. 29, to the end.

We have here the last and most dreadful plague of Egypt ; Israel's departure ; and some further directions about the passover.

29 **A**ND it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, *his son and heir, unto the firstborn of the captive that [was] in the dungeon, the house of the fit, that is, the drawers of water ;* and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians ; and there was a great cry in Egypt ; for [there was] not a house where [there was] not one dead, *where there was any firstborn son.**

31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, [and] get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel ; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone ; and bless me also, *pray for me that I may not perish.* And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste ; for

* This was at midnight, when asleep, and they thought themselves secure. They expected some comfort after the three days of darkness, when this great calamity came upon them. Thus God fulfilled his threatening, chap. xi. 5. and awfully punished them for the death of those children of the Israelites, whom they had destroyed.

- They said, We [be] all dead [men,] *we shall all be destroyed.*
- 34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their
- 35 shoulders. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed, *or requested,* of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment:
- 36 And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent, *or gave freely,* unto them [such things as they required.] And they spoiled the Egyptians.
- 37 And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses, *their place of general rendezvous,* to Succoth, *so called, because they there dwelt in tents or booths;* about six hundred thousand on
- 38 foot [that were] men, beside *women and children.* And a mixed multitude went up also with them, *strangers of several nations;** and flocks, and herds, [even] very much cattle.
- 39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither
- 40 had they prepared for themselves any victual. Now the sojourning *from place to place* of the children of Israel, *and their fathers who dwelt in Egypt,* [was] four hundred and thirty
- 41 years.† And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.
- 42 It [is] a night to be much observed, *or, as in the Hebrew, a night of observations,* unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this [is] that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations, *in which his power, mercy, and faithfulness appeared.*
- 43 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This [is] the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger, *that is,*
- 44 *no uncircumcised gentile,* eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised
- 45 him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner, and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten, *to promote family piety, and brotherly love;* thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house: neither
- 47 shall ye break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircum-
- 49 cised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that

* At least fifteen hundred thousand in all; some writers say, more than two millions. A vast increase from seventy souls!

† That is, from the time of Abraham's departure from Haran, Gen. xii. 1-5, to the giving of the law, as the apostle shows, Gal. iii. 16, 17. Abraham and his posterity were two hundred and fifteen years in Canaan, and two hundred and fifteen years in Egypt.

is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

- 50 Thus did all the children of Israel ; as the LORD com-
 51 manded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the selfsame day, [that] the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies, *ordering and marshalling them in a regular manner.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **G**OD can make the stoutest sinners yield and submit to his commands. It is in vain to contend with him, if one plague will not do, he has more ; men must bend, or break. Submit to God, therefore, *lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.*

2. The time will come, when the proudest sinners will be glad of the prayers of those servants of God whom they have despised. *And Pharaoh said, be gone and bless me also, v. 32.* He was glad of the prayers of those whom he had threatened with continued slavery, yea, with death. This is the case with sinners, when on a sick and dying bed ; they then send for ministers, or for this or that good man whom they have despised, and say, Bless me also. But how little good can be expected from those who have obstinately defied the Almighty, and slighted his messages, all their days.

3. See the wisdom of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the reasonableness of attending upon it. The passover was a wise and good institution, the Lord's Supper answers the same end. It is the memorial of a great event, of a glorious deliverance ; it is more worthy of remembrance, as the redemption it celebrates is greater, and the observation of it easier. All christians should attend upon it, for it is an ordinance for ever, and the command of Christ is, *This do, in remembrance of me.*

CHAP. XIII.

Israel being led out of Egypt, God here gives them directions about sanctifying their firstborn ; repeats the warning about the feast of unleavened bread ; and the Israelites march, under the divine guidance ; with Joseph's bones.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto
 2 me, consecrate, or set apart to my service, all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, [both] of man and of beast ; it [is] mine, by a *peculiar right, being preserved, when the Egyptians were destroyed,*
 3 And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, *this first day of unleavened bread, to keep up a memorial of it, in*

- which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage ; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this [place :] *and this shall be the memorial,* there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out, in the month 4 Abib, *which signifies, an ear of corn.* And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service 6 in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day [shall be] a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days ; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven 8 seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, [This is done] because of that [which] the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt ; *that is, this feast of unleavened bread shall be as a continual means 9 to remind you of your deliverance out of Egypt.* And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, *as familiar to you as any thing on your hand, which you are continually looking on ;* and for a memorial between thine eyes, *like something hung there, which comes continually in thy sight ;** that the LORD's law may be in thy mouth : for with a strong hand hath the 10 LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.
- 11 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, *the nations descended from Cain,* as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee ;
- 12 That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, *every firstborn male,* and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast ; the males [shall be] the LORD's.
- 13 And every firstling of an ass, *or of any unclean beast,* thou shalt redeem with a lamb ; and if thou wilt not redeem it, *if it is not worth the price of its redemption, which is left to thy own choice,* then thou shalt break his neck, *that it may not be put to any other use :* and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem, *for five shekels ; (Num. xviii. 16.) no choice is left here, it is expressly commanded.†*
- 14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What [is] this ?‡ that thou shalt say unto him, By

* This is an allusion to the forehead or frontlet jewels, which were commonly worn by the eastern ladies. The superstitious Jews understood this literally ; hence they wore scrolls of parchment, on which particular portions of the law were written, upon their foreheads and arms, which they called *Phylacteries*.

† In Num. iiii. 12. the tribe of Levi was taken, instead of the firstborn of Israel, and devoted to God's service. Travellers inform us, that the nation of Tanguth, in the East Indies, redeem their sons with a ram, which they offer as a kind of sacrifice ; which probably took its rise from this, as the ten tribes were scattered throughout all Asia.

‡ The Jews say, that those who had no children of their own were obliged to teach the children of others.

- strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from
 15 the house of bondage : And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast : therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males ; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes : for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.
 17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not [through] the way of the land of the Philistines, although that [was] near ; *not above three or four days journey ;** for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt :
 18 But God led the people about, [through] the way of the wilderness of the Red sea : † and the children of Israel went up harnessed, *or, by five in a rank, in great order and regularity,* out of the land of Egypt.
 19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him : for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you ; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.
 20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.
 21 And the LORD, *the Shekinah, or visible token of his presence,* went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way ; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light ;
 22 to go by day and night : ‡ He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, [from] before the people.

* Philistia lay on the back of Goshen. The Philistines were a warlike people ; and the Israelites, undisciplined, and just come out of slavery, were unfit to stand before them.

† Here they might be trained up in the art of war, and would be abstracted from the idolatry of their neighbours. Here also they were to receive a system of laws, and have many miracles wrought for them, to strengthen their faith in God's power and goodness.

‡ This was a large cloud that overspread the camp, like a pyramid, wide at the bottom and narrow at the top. It directed their march, went with them, sheltered them from the heat by day, and perhaps distilled some refreshing dews by night. In the day time it appeared like smoke, in the night like fire, to light them and keep off the beasts of prey ; and this continued with them till they came near to Canaan.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW proper is it that those, who are redeemed to God, should devote themselves to him. He has a claim to this, as he is the first and best of Beings, and were there no extraordinary interpositions of his providence in our favour, to entitle him to it. But there are such : we are delivered by him from worse than Egyptian slavery ; *we are not our own, but bought with a price* ; therefore obliged to yield ourselves to him. We should yield to God our first and our best ; the first of our days, our youth, strength, and vigour, and the best of our faculties ; he best deserves them. Parents should devote their children to God ; and when their lives are spared, and they are delivered from enemies and dangers, they should make a thankful acknowledgment of his mercy. Let us be engaged by the mercies of God, and especially by the redemption through Jesus Christ, to ~~present our souls, bodies, time, strength, children, wealth, and all~~ we have, to God, as a sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight.

2. We see the importance of making the deliverances granted by God to his people, familiar to the minds of the rising generation. It is our business to take every method to form them to wisdom and virtue : this is an important and necessary duty. Children should be early taught scripture stories, and God's dealing with his ancient people. That we have been contemplating is proper to teach them, especially if we proceed to an account of our spiritual redemption and deliverance. Children when they hear or read of any thing they do not understand, or when they attend upon gospel ordinances, as baptism ; or the Lord's supper, should ask, *What mean you by this service ?* They should be desirous and willing to learn ; parents should put them upon asking questions, be ready to teach them, if they do not inquire ; and not hide God's wonders from their children ; showing to generations to come the praise of the Lord, and his strength, and the wonderful works that he hath done. *Psalms lxxviii. 1—4.*

3. We see the wisdom and goodness of God, in proportioning the trials of his people to their strength. Their spirits were broken with slavery ; they were unfit to encounter difficulties, or to face any danger : this is a remarkable instance of divine compassion. Thus he deals with his people to this day. He knows their frame, and has compassion on their infirmities. *God is faithful ; who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

4. Let us adore and praise God for the provision he made for guiding and conducting his people through the wilderness. The Lord went before them, and the God of Israel was their reward, their direction and protection. This was a constant mira-

cle. We are not to expect such extraordinary appearances ; but *if we acknowledge God in all our ways, he will direct our paths.* Providence takes care of good men, leads them in the way, in the right way to the city of habitation, though not the nearest. Whatever difficulties he brings us into, he can extricate us out of them. How happy is it to be under the divine guidance, to be hid under the shadow of his wings ! This is the privilege of the christian church, and of all its members. See a prophecy of this in *Isaiah* iv. 5, 6. which plainly refers to gospel times. *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night ; for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle, for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.* Happy the church and people who are in such a case, yea, thrice happy the people, whose God is the Lord !

CHAP. XIV.

Contains a remarkable story, often referred to in scripture, by which God made to himself an everlasting name. We have here Pharaoh's pursuit of Israel ; their temper ; the directions given to Moses ; the deliverance of Israel ; and the destruction of the Egyptians.

- 1 AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
 2 the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth. between Migdol and the sea, over against
 3 Baalzephon : before it shall ye encamp by the sea.* For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They [are] entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in ; the mountains are on each side of them, and the sea is before them, so
 4 that they cannot escape. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them ; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his hosts, I will show my power and justice : that the Egyptians may know that I [am] the LORD. And they did so.
 5 And it was told the king of Egypt, by some of the mixed multitude who returned, that the people fled, were going away with a purpose not to return ; and the heart of Pharaoh, and of his servants was turned against the people, and they repented of having let them go, and they said, Why have we
 6 done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us ? And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him :

* Instead of going over the Isthmus of Suez, they were commanded to turn to the right, along the edge of the Red sea, into the straits, or passage between the mountains of Hircan. Into these straits God led them, to avoid war with the Philistines, ch. xiii. 17. to draw Pharaoh forth upon a supposed advantage gotten, v. 3. and to try the faith of his people.

7 And he took six hundred chosen chariots; and all the chariots
8 of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. And the LORD
hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, *who knew the
Israelites were an undisciplined multitude, and therefore he*
pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Is-
rael went out with an high hand; *not like fugitives, but openly
and boldly, and in military order, (ch. xiii. 18.) being rescued*
9 *out of their bondage by the mighty power of God.* But the
Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses [and] chariots
of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook
them *just as they were encamping by the sea, beside Pihahi-*
roth, before Baalzephon.

10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted
up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them;
and they were sore afraid; *and no wonder, for they were in a
strait between two mountains, the sea before them, and Pharaoh
and all his army in their rear;* and the children of Israel cried
out unto the LORD: *some prayed sincerely, others only cried*
11 *for fear.* Then they began to murmur, And they said unto
Moses, *as if he had intended their destruction,* Because [there
were] no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in
the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to
12 carry us forth out of Egypt? [Is] not this the word that we
did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may
serve the Egyptians? For [it had been] better for us to serve
the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.*

13 And Moses, *who bore this with unparalleled meekness, made
a most courageous and heroic answer, and said unto the people,*
Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD,
which he will show to you today; *stand still in solemn admi-*
ration, till you see cause to break out into songs of praise; for
the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them
again no more for ever, *in that manner, namely, alive, armed,*
14 *and ready to devour you.* The Lord shall fight for you, and ye
shall hold your peace; *only forbear murmuring, and God will
do all for you.*

15 And the LORD said unto Moses, *probably in answer to some
secret petition he had offered to God to pardon the people and
appear for them,* Wherefore criest thou unto me? *this is not
a time for prayer, but for active service:* Speak unto the chil-
dren of Israel, that they go forward toward the Red sea, *that*
16 *lies before them.* But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out
thine hand over the sea, and divide it, *command it in my name
to divide itself:* and the children of Israel shall go on dry
17 [ground] through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will

* It was strange that they should thus despise their liberty, distrust God's power, and affront Moses. Justly does the Psalmist say, *Psalms cvi. 7.* "Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red sea."

harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them; and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen, *and will make*
 18 *myself known and feared through all the earth.* And the Egyptians shall know that I [am] the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel *in the cloud, now removed and went behind them;* and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them, *and thus separated between the Israelites and the Egyptians, giving light to one, and darkness to the*
 20 *other:* And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to [them,] but it gave light by night [to these:] so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go [back] by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry [land,] and the waters were divided, *to the right hand and to the left.* And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry [ground:] and the waters [were] a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. *God could immediately have frozen the sea, and made a way over it; but he chose to do a new and strange thing in the earth.*

22 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, [even] all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. *It is probable they did not see where they*

23 *were going.** And it came to pass that in the morning watch, between daybreak and sunrise, *that* the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, frowned upon them, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud,† and troubled the host of the Egyptians, (*Psa. xviii. 14.*) *with terrible and prodigious storms of thunder and lightning, (ch. xv. 20. Psa. lxxvii. 18, 19.)*

24 *whereby they were thrown into great disorder:* And, running foul on each other, took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily; *perhaps the water began to rise through the sand, and their wheels sunk in:* so that the Egyptians, seeing the dreadful *case they were in,* said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against
 25 the Egyptians. *They began to be wise too late.* And while they were thus in the midst of the sea, *all in confusion, and the Israelites on the shore,* the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch

* It was about midnight, seven days after the full moon, therefore dark; and the cloud between them and the Israelites might prevent their seeing the sea standing as walls on each side of them.

† Or the meaning may be, that God turned the bright side of the cloud toward the Egyptians, on which they saw the fire, and, by the light of it, the sea as walls, as it were; on each side of them; and were terrified exceedingly.

out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their
 27 horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength, *to its ordinary course and motion*, when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in
 28 the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen [and] all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so
 29 much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry [land] in the midst of the sea; and the waters [were] a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.
 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the
 31 sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses. *They sang his praises, as in the next chapter, but soon forgot his works.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **P**ROVIDENCE sometimes leads men into straits, to answer wise purposes; to magnify his power and goodness in their remarkable deliverance; to show the vanity of human helpers, and encourage confidence in him. Let not this seem strange, or discourage any. *Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.*

2. Observe and lament the great degree of hardness to which the heart may be brought. What folly and madness was Pharaoh guilty of! what excuse can be made for such a conduct? What could he intend by it? But he and his people were mad with envy and revenge. One would have thought the last plague should have humbled him; but he grew worse and worse, till utter destruction came upon him. The conduct of the Israelites was equally strange, in doubting and murmuring, after all these glorious appearances for them. It had been righteous in God to cut them off. Bp. HALL observes, 'God's patience was no less a miracle, than their deliverance.'

3. Let us adore the divine power in thus dividing the sea. Whatever objection there may be raised against this miracle, we may justly say with the Psalmist, *What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?* *Psal. cxiv. 5.* No wonder it divided at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob! We are called upon to behold, and meditate on this great work, *Psal. lxxvi. 5, 6, 7.* *Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him. He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let*

not the rebellious exalt themselves. Observe God's power ; the waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, the depths also were troubled. The sea is his, and he made it ; he governs it as he pleaseth. God is still able to defend his people ; and he promises, *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned ; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee ; therefore trust in him.* The apostle says, *Heb. xi. 29. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land.* And the prophet Isaiah exhorts us to trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

4. With what horror and confusion will sinners at last see their misery, when it is too late, and God looks upon them with the terrors of his final wrath ! What a terrible scene of confusion was here, when the ground began to open under them, when the waves were rolling down upon them, and no possibility of escape ! *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth.* The sea swallowed them up, and having overwhelmed them awhile, cast them on its sands, a spectacle of triumph to the adversaries. Like this shall be the case of impenitent sinners ; they oppose God, but sudden destruction cometh upon them, from which they shall not escape. With what horror will sinners see the bottomless pit open before them ! They will then be glad to return to the body, or the world they have left ; but they are swallowed up in the gulf of immeasurable eternity ! Let sinners hear and fear, and sin no more presumptuously.

5. With what joy shall good men, at last, see all their enemies destroyed, and themselves secured in perfect victory and triumph. The enemies that perplex them at present, shall at length be destroyed, and vex them no more for ever. So shall God overwhelm Satan and all his hosts ; death and destruction shall be swallowed up in victory. The people of God shall stand on the shore of another world, and see them all destroyed, to rise no more ! In the faith and hope of this great work indeed, let us fear the Lord and believe the Lord, and his servant Moses ; then shall we be made meet to share in the deliverances of God's people, and to join in the song of Moses and the Lamb for ever.

CHAP. XV. 1—19.

*Contains the song of Moses, the servant of the Lord. It was indited by him, and sung by him and the Israelites on the shore of the Red sea, on the last day of unleavened bread, which was appointed to be an holy convocation. The design of it was, to express joy in God for their late deliverance, and to cherish sentiments of gratitude and obedience to him, both in Moses and the people.**

- 1 **T**HEN sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and every one, being impressed with a lively sense of his deliverance, spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Though the horses were numerous and terrible, yet God overthrew them all, as easily as if there had been but one horse and one rider. The LORD [is] my strength, not only my powerful helper, but my strength and courage itself, having had no occasion to exert any of my own; and my song, he alone is the subject of it: and he is become my salvation, he did it all himself, and personally engaged for me: he [is] my God, particularly concerned for my happiness as an Israelite, and the sole object of my worship, love and trust; and I will prepare him an habitation, contribute cheerfully to it out of my spoils; he is also my father's God; not a strange God, unknown till this day, but the ancient protector of my family, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will exalt him; I have a thousand proofs of his love and care, therefore I will maintain the highest veneration for him, speak well of his name, celebrate his praise, and join heartily in his worship. The LORD [is] a man of war, a noble warrior, an irresistible champion, better than thousands of chariots and horsemen: the LORD Jehovah [is] his name, the Almighty God that keepeth his word. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea with violence, like an arrow shot out of a bow: his chosen captains also, the most valiant, the greatest tyrants, are drowned in the Red sea, which was thought to be under the protection of the gods of Egypt. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone, as unable to rise again, as a stone plunged in the depth of the sea. Then Moses, leaving the plain narration of the fact, breaks out into the most grand and sublime figures. Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O

* This is, undoubtedly, the most ancient and noble piece of poetry in the world. A French critic observes, 'the turn is great, the thoughts noble, the style sublime and magnificent; the expressions strong, the figures bold: every part abounds with images that strike the mind and possess the imagination. Some of the finest passages in heathen writers appear cold and groveling, when compared with this song.'

- LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy, *hurled them against the rocks in the Red sea, and dashed them in pieces at once.*
- 7 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast over-
thrown them: that rose up against thee: * thou didst not em-
ploy any earthly force, or angelic hosts, but sentest forth thy
wrath; [which] consumed them; *as easily, suddenly, and utterly,*
- 8 as stubble: *Isa. xlv. 14.* And with the blast of thy nos-
trils the waters were gathered together; † the floods stood up-
right as an heap, [and] the depths were congealed in the
heart of the sea, *made to stand still on heaps, as if they had*
- 9 *been mountains of ice.* The enemy said, I will pursue, I
will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust, my revenge,
shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my
10 hand shall destroy them: ‡ Thou didst blow with thy wind,
no need to stretch out thy arm, thy breath was sufficient, the
sea covered them; *overwhelmed the vast and mighty host:*
they sank as lead in the mighty waters, *suddenly, irrecover-*
ably. Then Moses, transported beyond himself, breaks out in
the noblest ascriptions of praise.
- 11 Who [is] like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods,
among the great ones of the earth, or the heathen gods, on
whom they called in their distress? who [is] like thee, glori-
ous in holiness, manifesting thy power in an holy manner, pun-
ishing tyranny, and delivering the oppressed; whose holiness is
thy chief excellency and glory; fearful [in] praises, terrible
in those things for which we praise thee; doing wonders, great
and marvellous works, for an ungrateful people, who provoked thee
- 12 even at the Red sea. Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the
earth swallowed them; *the sea returned with so much force as*
to bury some in the earth at the bottom, and threw others on the
- 13 *sands on shore.* Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people
[which] thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided [them] in
thy strength unto thy holy habitation. *We are confident thou*
wilt lead them safely and quietly, as a shepherd his flock; wilt
guide them by thy firesence, defend them by thy strength, till
they come unto thy holy habitation; to Canaan, the promised
land. The effect this would have on neighbouring nations is
- 14 then beautifully described. The people shall hear [and] be
afraid; (*see Deut. ii. 26. Josh. ii. 9.*) sorrow shall take

* Egypt was proud of her excellency and strength; and despised and contemned God: and as those proud creatures rose up against him, he also rose and assumed all the elevation of his infinite grandeur, all the height of his supreme majesty, against them.

† Better to paint the divine indignation and its effects, the prophet borrows the image of human wrath, whose lively transports are accompanied with an hasty breathing, which causes a violent and impetuous blast; and when this wrath, in a powerful person, directed to a fearful populace, it forces them to give way, and fall in a tumultuous manner upon one another. Thus the affrighted waters flew from their bed, and crowded together.

‡ Some I will cut to pieces, others I will bring back to slavery. They thought themselves sure of victory, rioting in the spoil, and defying the God of Israel: but how dreadful the issue, and how beautiful the description! v. 10.

- hold on the inhabitants of *Palestina, the Philistines who lived nearest and would first hear of it.* Then the dukes of Edom, the descendants of Esau, who lived on the borders of the Red sea, and through whose country they were to pass, shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them *when they hear of these things*; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away, *like wax before*
- 16 *the fire.* Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be [as] still as a stone, quite impotent, unable to resist, *like men amazed and out of their senses*: till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, [which] thou hast purchased, *that is, redeemed*
- 17 *with a strong arm.* Thou shalt bring them in with great kindness, tenderness and care, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, *in the mountainous country of Canaan, or in the mountain where the temple was afterward built,* [in] the place, O LORD, [which] thou hast made for thee to dwell in, [in] the Sanctuary, O LORD, [which] thy hands have established, *which thou wilt certainly cause to be built and*
- 18 *established.* The LORD shall reign for ever and ever, *to protect his Israel, and perpetuate their blessings from generation to generation.* Then the song concludes, *as it began, with relating the plain matter of fact, that their gratitude and obedience to their great deliverer might be handed down from generation to*
- 19 *generation.* For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry [land] in the midst of the sea.

REFLECTIONS.

(Particularly adapted to the defeat of the Rebels, at the battle of Culloden, April 16, 1746, when these were written.)

1. **W**E may learn how proper it is, to take a solemn view of the deliverances God hath afforded us. Israel stood on the shore of the Red sea, and looked back on the danger they had escaped, and the enemy they had seen destroyed before their eyes. Let us also look back on the deliverances God hath wrought for us, with wonder, gratitude, and joy. Let us recollect the imminent danger we were in, and the remarkable manner in which we were freed from it. God, to punish us for our sins, hath caused a sword to go through great part of our land; suffered our enemies, more than once, to be successful; while every good man's heart trembled for fear, for himself, his family, his friends, his country, and the church of God. Our national sins had been so many, that we had reason to fear God ~~was~~ angry,

and would utterly consume us. Our hearts were ready to melt at the apprehension of one or another instance of the success of our enemies ; the consequence of which would have been the loss of every thing dear and valuable. We should have been brought to worse than Egyptian slavery, to the cruel bondage of popery, and all the dismal effects of arbitrary power. But we were delivered, and our liberty fixed on a firm foundation. How proper is it, that we should remember this, to make us cautious, humble, watchful, and obedient. We shall not think this exhortation unseasonable, when we recollect how prone we are to forget our dangers and escapes, at least when they are past and gone, and to think each of them less considerable than they really were. We are apt to laugh at our former fears, and diminish the glory of our mercies.

2. Let us ascribe the praise of all our deliverances to God, even to *the Lord, who is a man of war, whose name is JEHOVAH ; his right hand got us the victory ; he is become our salvation.* Whoever was the instrument, he was the great author, and should have the praise. He is our father's God, let us exalt him. In various instances he hath freed us from the yoke of bondage, and baffled the designs of that tyrannical and cruel family, that had been the scourge and plague of this nation for more than one hundred and fifty years. Let us exalt him in our thoughts ; entertain the highest veneration for so excellent and glorious a Being ; especially one who has been so kind to us. Let us reverence his name, his day, and his sanctuary ; exalt him in our hearts, by our lips, and in our lives. Let us show our gratitude, by transmitting to the rising generation, the knowledge of his mighty acts and the wonderful works he hath done ; and thus keep the memory of them in our own hearts, and teach our children *the loving kindness of the Lord.*

3. We may observe the remark of Solomon verified here, that *pride and insolence often go before destruction, and a haughty spirit is before a fall.* This was the case with Pharaoh and his hosts. *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil ; my lust shall be satisfied upon them ; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.* This was the case with our rebellious enemies ; they seemed to be sure of victory, expected nothing but to see our armies flying, this happy land of liberty enslaved worse than ever, and the whole nation carved out among the favourites and friends of an insolent pretender. Having been long, as they thought, kept out of possession of what they imagined their due, or their desert, they would have seized upon it violently ; and, like an hungry beast, have devoured every thing that came in their way, without pity or remorse. They expected nothing but to pursue and overthrow ; to riot in the spoil of the nation, and to satisfy their lusts upon those who had oppos-

ed their schemes. But in the greatness of his excellency, God lifted up himself, and overthrew them. They rose up against the king he had made, the people he had chosen, and the religion he had established ; and *he sent forth his wrath, which consumed them as stubble* ; and perhaps there scarce ever was a victory, to which this similitude, *consumed as stubble*, might more justly be applied ; so speedily and irrecoverably were they defeated. Let us learn to guard against pride and insolence, when speaking of the most contemptible enemy, for *the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Those that walk in pride, God is most likely to abase. He resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

4. When under impressions of gratitude for great deliverances, let us bind ourselves by solemn ties to the Lord, and devote ourselves, and what we have and are, to his service. Moses, in v. 2. takes advantage of the good disposition of the people, to lead them to promise that they would be grateful, dutiful, and obedient : and this should be the fruit of those good impressions which divine mercy makes upon us. Has the Lord preserved our liberty, our property, and religion ? Let all be employed for him. Let us study, that we may *render to the Lord, according to his benefits* ; and consider what we can do for his honour, and what good offices for the house of our God. Let us not only *offer to God thanksgiving*, but *pay our vows*, the vows we made in the day of trouble. Every fresh remembrance of divine favour, is a renewed call to be grateful and obedient. Are we delivered out of the hands of our enemies ? *Let us serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness* ; not like Israel, who *sang his praises, but soon forgot his works*. Let us remember them, and be engaged by them to obey his laws, and serve his interest. This is the best and most acceptable expression of gratitude : *to obey is better than sacrifice* ; better than even singing and giving praise : it is the likeliest way to obtain further favour. Let us then, this day, lay our souls under fresh engagements to do the will of God, in all its branches, with all steadiness and cheerfulness. An humble, holy heart, is the best habitation we can prepare for him, and well doing is the surest and best method of exalting and glorifying him.

5. Let us take encouragement from what God hath done, to trust him for the future, and to hope that he will still protect us : thus Moses did. The malice of our enemies was restless and implacable ; they seemed desirous to move heaven and earth to bring about their purposes, and were quite mad with envy, rage, and disappointment. *But he that sitteth in heaven laughed at them ; the Lord had them in derision.* Thus, like the Canaanites before Israel's God, they trembled and melted away. Let us adore that kind Providence, which not only suppressed the rebellion, but brought to light the secret combinations and rebellious associations of those, who, while they stiled themselves patriots,

and the only espousers and defenders of the interests of their country, have been labouring to subdue and undermine it ; or, which is nearly as bad, have stood tamely by to see others do it. God hath not yet forsaken our land, but will, we trust, discover and confound all the plots of our enemies, that fear and dread shall fall upon them, and that they shall be still as a stone. May we not hope, that *the Lord, who is our strength and our song*, will, with regard to this also, *become our salvation*. Let our souls *make our boast in God*, and place our confidence in him alone, *who hath delivered, and doth deliver, and we trust will still deliver us*.

6. Let us be thankful for our more excellent deliverance by Jesus Christ, and, with the song of Moses, join also that of the Lamb. This reflection and advice is never unseasonable. When we commemorate temporal deliverances, we should then, especially, stir up our hearts to remember spiritual ones. God's right hand became glorious in power, when by his Son, he destroyed the works of the devil, and overcame principalities and powers ; and he shall at length destroy all the church's enemies. According to *Rev. xv. 2, 3, 4.* the heavenly host, those especially *that had gotten the victory over the beast, stood upon the sea of glass, having the harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.* This is described as their stated employ ; it is an abridgment of this song we have been considering : they celebrate the complete victory over their enemies, and ascribe the honour of all to God. It is called *the song of the Lamb*, because Jesus, the Lamb of God, is therein celebrated as the author and finisher of that great deliverance. He does for his people, what Jehovah did for Israel. Let us be solicitous, that, by divine grace, we may be qualified to bear our part in this song. Let us boldly oppose the yoke of our spiritual enemies, and carry on our warfare against them, till victory be completed. In the prospect of this, let us begin the song of heaven upon earth, and long to perfect it in a better world, where no tears are mingled with the song, no murmurings nor provocations are known. We shall there see Moses and the Lamb, and by them be taught these songs of praise ; and see abundantly more of their excellency, beauty, and suitableness, than it is possible for us to do here. *Thither all the redeemed of the Lord shall come, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

CHAP. XV. 20, to the end.

Having considered the song of Moses, we have here an account of the manner in which it was sung ; and some circumstances that attended Israel's march from the Red sea.

- 20 **A**ND Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, and half sister of Moses, took a timbrel, or small drum, in her hand : and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances, *which was the usual way of rejoicing in those days.* And Miriam answered them, *that is, the men, saying, probably after every verse that they sung,** Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
- 22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur, or *Etham, of which Shur might be a part ;* and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. *This was a great difficulty to them and*
- 23 *their cattle.* And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they [were] bitter : therefore the name of it was called Marah, *that is, bitterness.*
- 24 And the people, *instead of looking up to God, ungratefully* murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink ?
- 25 And he cried unto the LORD ; and the LORD showed him a tree, [which] when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet : *God could have done this with a word, but he chose to use means, to exercise the faith and submission of Moses and the Israelites ;* there he made for them a statute and an ordinance ; *he admonished them to take heed of murmuring, and to carry themselves more obediently for the future : and made this a statute, that if they would do so, he would be gracious to them ;* and there he proved them ; *tried their faith, by the want of water, and their obedience, by this*
- 26 *general command ;* And he said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians : for I [am] the LORD that healeth thee ; *am able to heal and help thee in body and soul, and to preserve thee from all evil, both present and future.†*
- 27 And they came to Elim where [were] twelve wells of water, *enough for themselves and their cattle, and threescore and ten palm trees, which were refreshing, both by their shade and their fruit ;* and they encamped there by the waters, *which was one of the most pleasant spots in their journey.*

* This was a common method among the Israelites, and their temple worship was a good deal in this way.

† It was necessary this precaution should be added ; considering what God had done for them, they might expect he would bear with every thing, and not be displeased with, nor punish their disobedience ; but here he declares the contrary.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn hence, how soon the most pleasing circumstances in life may be imbibited. The Israelites were very happy on the borders of the Red sea ; wonderful miracles were wrought for them, and their enemies were quite destroyed : they entered into the wilderness, and there wanted water ; but they could find none but bitter water. This is often the case of the Israel of God : when they have got rid of this or the other difficulty, or enemy, they think all is safe, and that there is no more danger : but the next stage of their journey tries their faith and their patience again. They see water, and expect comfort and refreshment in it, but meet with disappointment. Thus are we often pleased with expectations that only tantalize us. We should therefore not expect too much in this wilderness, should not be too fond of any creature enjoyment. If at any time we come to Elim, to wells of water, we should be thankful for it, but not take up our rest there ; we should think of going forward. Let us keep Canaan in view, and the prospect of that will bear us through all the difficulties and hardships of the wilderness.

2. Let us take encouragement from God's promises to Israel, humbly to hope, that *if we hearken to the voice of the Lord our God, and do that which is right in his sight*, he will bring none of those diseases upon us, which he brought upon the Egyptians ; that we shall find him ready to bless us, and to secure us from those evils, which he brings upon his enemies. God's commandments are life to them that find them, and health to all their bones. Let us hope that he will heal our diseases, and crown our lives with loving kindness. But if not, he will in a spiritual sense be our physician, *the Lord that healeth us* ; he will rectify our disorders, make afflictions useful, and subservient to the health of our souls ; and at length bring us to the heavenly Canaan.

CHAP. XVI.

The last chapter concluded with an account of Israel being easy and happy at Elim, but here we find them in the wilderness, in difficulties and straits. They murmur for want of meat ; God promises to provide for them ; he accomplishes the promise ; and gives directions about the management of their new provisions.

1 **A**ND they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which [is] between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt, *just a month from their coming out of Egypt ; so long the provisions lasted which they brought with them.*

- 2 And the whole congregation, *that is, the greatest part of the* children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness : And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD, *by any of the plagues,* in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, [and] when we did eat bread to the full ;* for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. *Ungrateful people ! thus to censure Moses and Aaron, who had been instruments of such deliverances, and whose hearts were full of kindness to them.*
- 4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain, *not fire and brimstone, which they might justly have expected, but* bread from heaven for you, *that is, manna, whereof they made themselves bread ; it shall fall down from heaven, in the manner of rain ;* and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate, *an omer,* every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no, *whether they will be drawn to obedience hereby, or still continue obstinate and refractory.* And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day *of the week,* they shall prepare [that] which they bring in ; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.
- 6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt, *and not we, as you say, to kill you with hunger :* And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD, *the glorious appearance of God in the cloud,* (v. 10.) for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD : and what [are] we, that ye murmur against us ? *We are but instruments that God makes use of in this great work ; he is the principal author ; therefore your murmurings reflect more upon him than us.* And Moses said, [This shall be,] when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full ; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him : and what [are] we ? your murmurings [are] not against us, but against the LORD.
- 9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near, *in the place of public worship,* before the LORD : for he hath heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud, *with an extraordinary brightness.*
- 11 12 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel : speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye

* Probably they had not such plenty in Egypt, nor did they think it so good, while they were slaves there ; but their impatience and fretfulness made them say this.

shall be filled with bread ; and ye shall know that I [am] the LORD your God, *ye shall have fresh proofs of my power and faithfulness.*

- 13 And it came to pass, that at even, the quails, *feathered fowls*, came up, and covered the camp : and in the morning the dew, *under which the manna was hid*, lay round about the host.
- 14 And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness [there lay] a small round thing, [as]
- 15 small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw [it,] they said one to another, It [is] manna, or, *What is this ?* for they wist not what it [was.] And Moses said unto them, This [is] the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat, *the portion which God hath given you.*
- 16 This [is] the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer, *about five pints*, for every man, [according to] the number of your persons ; take ye every man for [them] which [are] in
- 17 his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered,
- 18 some more, some less. And when they did mete [it] with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack ;* they gathered every man according to his eating, *every master of a family according to the number of his family.* And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning ; *what they could not eat was to be made away with, to prevent their distrust in God's care and goodness in giving them more.* Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses ; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank : and Moses was wroth with them, *was angry at this perverseness, this unbelief and disobedience.* And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating : and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. *Hereby God taught them diligence in providing food while they had time and means, and to depend daily upon his providence.*
- 22 And it came to pass, [that] on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man †] and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses, *that they might receive directions from him how to order this their double portion.*
- 23 And he said unto them, This [is that] which the LORD hath said to the patriarchs of old; Tomorrow [is] the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD ; *a plain intimation, that the sabbath was observed before the covenant at Sinai :* bake [that] which ye will bake [today,] and seethe that ye will seethe, *that ye may not have it to do on the sabbath ;* and that which re-

* They put it into a common stock ; and though some gathered more, and some less, yet, when measured out, it was just the quantity that was wanted. The apostle applies this to the contributions of christians, that they should impart to those who need, 2 Cor. viii. 24, 15.

† It does not appear that Moses had told the people to do this ; but, to their surprise, when they had gathered the usual quantity, there was as much more left.

- 24 maineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning; as Moses bade : and it did
 25 not stink, neither was there any worm therein.* And Moses said, Eat that today, *which ye gathered yesterday ; for today [is] a sabbath unto the LORD : today ye shall not find it in*
 26 the field. Six days ye shall gather it ; but on the seventh
 27 day, [which is] the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, [that] there went out [some] of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none.
 28 And the LORD *was displeased with them, and said unto Moses, that he might say it to these people, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws ? especially the important law*
 29 *of keeping the sabbath ? See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days : abide ye every man in his place, in the camp, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day, to gather man-*
 30 *na, or to do any servile work. (Lev. xxiii. 3.)* So the people
 31 rested on the seventh day from gathering manna. And the house of Israel, called the name thereof Manna ; *which was taken from the question they asked, What is it ? and it [was] like coriander seed, white ; and the taste of it, before it was baked, [was] like wafers [made] with honey, but when dressed, it was like fresh oil, Numb. xi. 8.*
 32 And Moses said, This [is] the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations ; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt ; *that they may see how good God is, and how unreasonable your*
 33 *murmurings are.* And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot,† and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. *This was another*
 34 *miracle, that it kept so long without putrefaction.* As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept ; *that is, in the ark, where the testimony or two tables which testified or declared God's will to the people, were to be put.‡*
 35 And the children of Israel did eat manna near forty years, until they came to a land inhabited ; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Now an omer [is] the tenth [part] of an ephah.||

* This was another extraordinary providence, and showed the difference between doing a thing by God's command and blessing, and doing it contrary to these.

† Paul tells us, it was a golden pot, *Heb. ix. 4.*

‡ Though this is related here to make a full end of the story of the manna, yet it was not done till after the giving of the law, *Deut. x. 5.*

|| An ephah was about three pecks, or forty eight pints.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E see here the variety of events that befel the Israel of God ; we left them at Elim ; perhaps they expected to move toward Canaan, but we find them in the wilderness still. This is frequently the case of good men, in their journey toward the heavenly world ; 'when pleased with the prospect, they are unwilling to leave the delightful place : but they must arise and depart, and enter into the wilderness again. Let us expect such things in this world, and be easy in every place, since God's providence is as real and as great a security, as the pillar of cloud and fire was to Israel.

2. Let us guard our hearts, that they do not murmur against God, when we are in difficult circumstances. What a strange and perverse people was this ! They quarrelled with Moses, with Aaron, and with God ; as if there were a combination between them to starve them all. The heart is too ready to fret against God when brought into straits ; therefore should be *kept with all diligence*. We should not speak against God, nor distrust his power and care ; especially after having had experience of it ; having *sang his praise* for past mercies, let us *not forget his works*, lest we dishonour him, injure our own souls, and provoke him to take away our remaining comforts. A suspicious, murmuring temper, is a sufficient plague to any man ; therefore, *watch and pray ; neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed in the wilderness*.

3. Let us be more concerned about God's honour than our own. Thus Moses and Aaron were, *v. 7. And what are we, that ye murmur against us ? Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord* ; our injury is little when compared with his. We should be much more grieved when sinners affront God, and injure their own souls, than when they affront and injure us. We may perhaps deserve it from them, at least from God ; but he never deserves it : it is daring impiety against him, and therefore should affect and grieve us.

4. Let the daily supplies of life teach us to know the Lord, and depend upon him. *v. 12. At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God. God giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth for ever. The eyes of all wait on him ; he spreadeth our table, and filleth our cup*. The producing corn out of the earth, is as wonderful as the raining of manna from heaven ; let us therefore acknowledge God's hand in the supplies of life. We as constantly depend upon his providence and care, as Israel did ; therefore Christ teacheth us to pray, *Give us this day, our daily bread*. He expects that we, like Israel, should *labour for the meat which perisheth*, but with an eye to and dependence upon his providence ; without his blessing we shall labour in vain ; we

shall eat, but not be satisfied. Let our daily bread teach us to know and serve him, who giveth us food to eat, and giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Let us not be anxious for the morrow, but cast all our care on him who cureth for us.

5. Let us be careful that we sanctify God's sabbath. Remember, it is *the rest of the holy sabbath of the Lord*, therefore to be kept holy. It is our duty to be careful that we do not unnecessarily stir abroad. Provisions must be had on the Lord's day ; but good householders, and wise managers, will take care so to order it, that it may be had with as little trouble as possible. Such dressing of meat as keeps servants from public worship, when otherwise they might go out, is very wrong. It shows too great a fondness for the body ; it is doing unspeakable injury to servants ; it is setting before them and children a very bad example ; it is affronting to God, and polluting his sabbath. To such masters and mistresses it might be said, as the Lord doth, *v. 28. How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws ?*

6. Let us bless God for *that living bread which came down from heaven*, of which the manna was a type. Manna was pleasant, wholesome and nourishing ; but those who ate of it died ; it did not make them immortal ; but the bread of life that Christ gives, doth. This *comes down from heaven* : it feeds and nourishes us in the wilderness, and strengthens us for the active services of the christian life. *If any eat of this bread, they shall live for ever.* Christ, in his doctrines and grace, is the true manna. Let us receive his doctrines, feed on them by faith, and with understanding eat his flesh, that is, maintain a lively regard to him. This is the true bread of God, which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world ; let us therefore say, as the disciples did, *Lord, evermore give us this bread.*

CHAP. XVII.

Contains an account of the water brought from the rock, and the defeat of Amalek.

- 1 **A**ND all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim : *they had two stages between, but as nothing remarkable occurred there, they are not mentioned :*
- 2 and [there was] no water for the people to drink. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, *instead of addressing him in a respectful manner*, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with

- me, can I give you rain or wells of water? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? *distrust his power, goodness and fidelity, refusing to submit to his will, and to seek him by fervent prayer?*
- 3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore [is] this [that] thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?*
- 4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me, *and my*
- 5 *life is in great danger among them.* And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel, *that they may be eyewitnesses of this glorious work, and may report it to the people;* and thy rod, where-
- 6 with thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, *in the pillar of the cloud, the sign of my presence;* and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight
- 7 of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, *that is, temptation,* and Meribah, *that is, chiding or strife,* because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not? *will he be as good as his word, or not?*
- 8 Then came Amalek, *who was descended from the eldest son of Esau, by a concubine,† (see Gen. xxxvi. 12.)* and fought
- 9 with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, *some of the ablest and best,* and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with
- 10 the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur, *Miriam's husband, a person of great wisdom and experience,* went up to the top of the hill, *where the glory of the Lord*
- 11 *appeared.* And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek
- 12 prevailed.‡ But Moses' hands [were] heavy; and they took a stone, and put [it] under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side, *or one after another;* and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.
- 13 And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people, *that is, Amalek and his allies,* with the edge of the sword.

* This was absurd, foolish and wicked language. No doubt Moses attempted to quiet them, to reason with them, to show them the wonders God had wrought, and to direct their eyes to him, but all in vain.

† The Amalekites lived near the wilderness, where Israel were encamped, and were a very powerful nation. Perhaps they thought the Israelites came to take possession of some part of their country, and therefore, though they might have heard of their great deliverance, resolved to attack them.

‡ This was a posture of prayer, which he undoubtedly offered up. The expression also signifies, lifting up of the rod, which was their standard.

- 14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this [for] a memorial in a book; and rehearse [it] in the ears of Joshua, *that he may form no league with the Amalekites: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven: though they are a numerous and flourishing people, by degrees they shall be so weakened, as to become of no note, and be*
 15 *forgotten, like dead men. (See Deut. xxv. 17—19.)* And Moses built an altar, *whereon to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, and to stand as a memorial of this first victory against the Amalekites;* and called the name of it JEHOVAH-nissi, *that is,*
 16 *the Lord, my banner.:* For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn [that,] *or, as the margin more plainly renders it, Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the Lord; therefore the LORD [will have] war with Amalek from generation to generation. Accordingly he was defeated by Saul, ruined by David, and never heard of afterward.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E have reason to be astonished at the untractable and incorrigible temper of Israel, and adore the patience of God, in bearing with their murmurings. They were strangely forgetful of his appearances for them, and fidelity to them. All the neighbouring nations knew it, but Israel would not see it. Moses argued with them, but all in vain. They showed themselves to be an obstinate and selfwilled people. If not humoured, they would affront God, and stone Moses. How wonderful was the divine patience that he did not make a full end! but overcame evil with good. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.* Thus he still bears with untractable, rebellious men. *May the goodness of God lead us to repentance, and make us careful not to tempt him, or chide with his messengers.*

2. Let us adore God's hand that could bring water out of a rock. This is often taken notice of in scripture, as a marvellous event. To have brought it out of the earth, would have been remarkable; but out of a rock, was much more so. We should learn hence, to trust God in every exigency; he can open rivers in the wilderness; he can turn flints into fountains of water. Blessed are the souls that seek him, that trust in his providence, and rely on his promises.

3. What a dreadful thing is it to rise up against God; to lift up the hand against his throne, as Amalek did! This we do, whenever we oppose his judgments, or trample his laws under foot; especially when we abuse his mercy, and receive his grace in vain. The persecutors of God's people lift up their hand against his throne, and certain and great will their destruction at length be. Those who think to carry matters with a high hand against God and his people, will sink into contempt and ruin.

4. See the prevalence of prayer, when attacking an enemy. This is true in a spiritual as well as a temporal sense. Christians should therefore be instant in prayer, and to that should add vigorous endeavours. Moses ordered Joshua to choose proper men, to use the most likely means of success, though his dependence was upon God. Thus let us *take the whole armour of God* ; go out to fight manfully ; and, joining our prayers and endeavours, we may hope for success ; *out of weakness we shall be made strong*. The interest of religion in the church of Christ, and in our own souls especially, is most likely to be successful when our prayers are most fervent.

5. We must be careful to remember the signal appearances of Providence for us. We should keep a memorial of them for our own use ; and inform posterity what God hath done for his church and people, in conquering their proud and unreasonable enemies, and in restoring and establishing their peace. Let us raise our domestic altars to *Jehovah our banner*, and say, as Samuel, *hitherto the Lord hath helped us*.

CHAP. XVIII.

Jethro brings Moses' wife and two sons to him ; Moses entertains him, and accepts his counsel.

- 1 **W**HEN Jethro, the priest of Midian, *who was probably a pious man, and a worshipper of the true God, the great grandson of Abraham, by Keturah and Moses' father in law*, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, [and] that the LORD had brought Israel out of
- 2 Egypt ; Then Jethro, Moses' father in law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, (*see ch. iv. 26.*)
- 3 And her two sons, of which the name of the one [was] Gershom, *that is, a stranger there*, for he said, I have been an
- 4 alien, in a strange land : And the name of the other [was] Eliezer, *that is, my God is an help* ; for the God of my father, [said he, was] mine help, and delivered me from the sword of
- 5 Pharaoh : And Jethro, Moses' father in law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he
- 6 encamped at the mount of God, *near mount Sinai* : And he, *that is, Jethro*, sent a message, and said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, *to congratulate thee on Israel's deliverance*, and thy wife and her two sons with her.
- 7 And Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance, *after the manner of that country*, and kissed him ;
- 8 and they asked each other of [their] welfare ; and they came into the tent. And Moses told his father in law all that the

- LORD had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, [and] all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and [how] the LORD delivered them. *Jethro had heard something of this before, v. 1. but Moses gave him a more particular account.** And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. And Jethro *expressed his joy in a very pious manner, and said, Blessed [be] the LORD, who hath delivered you Moses and Aaron, who were in such imminent danger, out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, and who hath delivered the people*
- 11 from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know more clearly than ever that the LORD [is] greater than all the heathen gods : for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, carried themselves with such scorn and insolence, as if they thought it impossible that God should deliver them out of their hands,
- 12 [he was] above them. And Jethro, Moses' father in law, *expressed his gratitude as the ancient patriarchs used to do, and took a burnt offering and sacrifices, peace offerings for thanksgiving, for to offer to God : and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread, to feast on the sacrifices, with Moses' father in law before God, before the cloud, and the altar on which the sacrifices were offered.*
- 13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people, to *hear and determine causes :* and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What [is] this thing that thou doest to the people ? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even ? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God, *to inquire what the will of God is in any doubtful case : and also* When they have a matter between themselves, they come unto me ; and I judge between one and another, and I do make [their] know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father in law remonstrated against this, and said unto him, The thing that thou doest [is] not good, *is not convenient, neither for thyself, nor the people.* Thou wilt surely wear away, *destroy thy health,* both thou, and this people that [is] with thee, *they will be weary of waiting till their turn comes :* for this thing [is] too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel,† and God shall be with thee, *to assist and bless thee, and show that my counsel is good, by the success that*

* This shows that the fame of those miracles was spread through the neighbouring nations : and how inexcusable they were in opposing Israel, and affronting Jehovah.

† Some think this was after the delivery of the law, because in *Deut. i.* it is mentioned after that important event. But the advice might be given now, though not put in practice till after the giving of the law.

- attends it :* Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God, *that is, extraordinary or difficult cases, and tell the people the divine determination ;* re-
- 20 *serve this privilege and honour to thyself :* And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do, *how to behave to God and to one another.*
- 21 Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, *who can bear fatigue, men of good sense and sagacity, of activity and good spirit, of courage and resolution, and such as fear God, who act upon religious principles, and stand in awe of God, the universal governor ; men of truth, upright, honest men, who will judge without partiality ; hating covetousness, who will not take a bribe to pervert justice, but will act a generous, disinterested part ;* and place [such] over them, [to be] rulers of thousands, [and] rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens ; *thus forming greater and lesser courts of*
- 22 *justice :* And let them judge the people at all seasons, *some or other of them sit continually :* and it shall be, [that] every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so shall it be easier for thyself, and they
- 23 shall bear [the burden] with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee [so,] *if he shall approve of this course which I suggest,* then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people also shall go to their place in peace ; *they shall have their controversies ended, and their minds quieted.*
- 24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and
- 25 did all that he had said. And Moses, *upon the people's recommendation,* chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds,
- 26 rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons : the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.
- 27 And Moses let his father in law depart, *dismissed him honourably : (see Num. x. 29.)* and he went his way into his own land, *much affected with what he had seen, and informed his neighbours of God's wonderful works.**

* It is thought the Kenites came from this country, to whom God showed kindness, for their kindness to Israel; and the Khebabites also came from hence, whose virtue Jeremiah celebrates.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us learn to take part in the joys and sorrows of God's people. Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord hath done to Israel, and blessed God on their account. All who love God, should rejoice to see his interest flourishing, his arm made bare for the prosperity of his servants. They should talk of and celebrate his wondrous works; and give him the glory due to his name. Unthankful Israel overlooked them, while Jethro rejoiced in them. This makes his conduct more remarkable, and worthy to be imitated by us.

2. Let us observe God's providential dealings with others, to increase our acquaintance with him; so Jethro did. *Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods; for, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.* Let us observe what he is doing for his church, and for particular souls, that we may understand more of his nature, and the design of his proceedings, and learn those lessons he would have us to learn. Let us especially observe his providence in abasing those who deal in pride, that we may learn humility, and fear the Lord continually. *Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, the dispensations of Providence, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord.* Psalm cvii. 43.

3. Let us be careful that the presence of our friends does not break in on the proper duties of life. Moses' father in law was a great and good man; brought him his wife and children, whom he had not seen for a long time: and for this reason Moses might have made some excuse for putting off attendance on public business; but he would not neglect it. After a day spent in feasting and rejoicing, he returned to his work. This gives us a good hint how to behave. Pleasure, or converse with friends, should not be our whole, nor even our main business; we should fill up our stations with proper services; live to important and useful purposes; and neither neglect our shops, our fields, nor our studies, for the company of our friends. Above all, let us not neglect devotion; but keep as near as may be to the stated times for it. A good man used to say to his friends, when time for secret worship was come, 'Excuse me for a while, I have a friend above, that is waiting for me.' Business, much less devotion, should never give way to the conversation of friends, especially not to visits of form and ceremony. 'It is,' as one observes, 'too great a compliment to our friends, to neglect our duty.'

4. We should guard against extremes, even in a good work. Jethro's advice was good; and in consequence of it Moses lived forty years longer, and died at the age of one hundred and twenty in the vigour of nature. We should consider what our strength will bear; too great application in younger days may perhaps shorten a man's life; and make him less serviceable to the

world, than otherwise he might have been. In this, *Wisdom is profitable to direct*. Friends are too ready to say to us, as Christ's disciples did, 'Master spare thyself.' There is very little need to enforce this advice in the present day, since it is generally found that more men rust away than wear away; but much need to quicken and stir them up to zeal and diligence.

5. Let us be willing to take advice of those, who in many respects are our inferiors, if they have truth and prudence on their side. Moses was nearly as old as Jethro; though as a friend of God, and a king of Israel, he was much his superior. But Moses was a meek man, glad of advice, and took it; he did not think himself above being advised. Those who do so are very proud, or very ignorant, or both. Others can often better judge what is fit for us than we can ourselves; they are not so much blinded by affection and interest. Let us be ever ready to learn from any one; and show that we are wise, by being willing to hear, and increase in learning and prudence.

6. Let us earnestly pray that our magistrates and governors may be such as Jethro directs Moses to choose; men of clear heads, and honest, generous hearts; men of piety and sagacity; of unwearied zeal, and undaunted resolution. How happy for our Israel, if all its magistrates were such as do not undertake the work for its honour and profit, but out of regard to God's honour, and the benefit of the community. Let us therefore pray for kings, and all that are in authority, that they may be such; then, as Jethro suggests, it will be likely that the people will lead quiet and peaceable lives.

CHAP. XIX.

We have here the people's approach to Sinai, and God's covenant with them there; the directions given to Moses and the people about preparing themselves; and the solemn appearance of God upon mount Sinai, when he delivered the law.

- 1 **I**N the third month,* when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came
- 2 they [into] the wilderness of Sinai.† For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come [to] the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount.
- 3 And Moses went up unto God, *to the presence of God where the cloud rested, (v. 9.)* and the LORD called unto him

* Or the third new moon, called *Sivan*, including the latter end of May and the former part of June.

† It is generally thought to be fifty days after they came out of Egypt: and accordingly the feast of Pentecost, which signifies fifty, is observed in remembrance of this event.

- out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel ; (*God had a right to give them what law he pleased, but he treats them as rational creatures, and tells them what he had done :*) Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and [how] I bare you on eagles' wings,* *carried you above all difficulties and dangers, and brought you unto myself, to serve me on this mount, (ch. iii. 12.) and to be my peculiar people.* Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people : for, or though, all the earth [is] mine, *and I am not confined to this* 6 *or the other nation :* And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, *a people near to the Lord, separated from the rest of the world, and to be an holy nation.* These [are] the words 7 which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him, *that they might tell them to the people.*
- 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD, *uttered them before the Lord, to confirm the obligation on the people's part, and to receive his answer.* And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee, *as the mediator between me and them, and the interpreter of my mind to them,* in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever, *no longer doubt thy mission.* And Moses told the words of the 10 people unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, *abstain from all pollution, and abound in prayer and sacrifices, and holy meditations,* and let them wash their clothes, *in token of* 11 *that inward purity which I require from them ;* And be ready against the third day ; for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.
- 12 And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, [that ye] go [not] up into the mount,† *or even so much as touch the border of it :* whosoever 13 toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death : There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through ; whether [it be] beast or man, it shall not live :‡ when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount, *to the boundary that is fixed, that they may hear what* 14 *is spoken, but no further.* And Moses went down from the

* Eagles carry their young ones on their backs, and spread out their feathers to keep them from falling.

† Had any attempted to do so, they would certainly have been struck dead with the lightning.

‡ This was designed to restrain their curiosity, to give them an awe of God, and train them up to obedience.

- mount unto the people, and sanctified the people ; and they
 15 washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day : come not at [your] wives ; *abstain even from lawful enjoyments, that your minds may be wholly intent upon this solemn business.*
- 16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, *out of which the lightnings came,* and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud ; *the angel, by whose disposition the law was delivered, made a sound like a loud trumpet ;* so that
 17 all the people that [was] in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God :
 18 and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire : and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.
- 19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, *(the Hebrew is very emphatical, and signifies, when it exceeded itself)* then Moses spake, as mediator, and God answered him by a voice, *by plain, distinct, audible words, so that the people might hear, v. 9.** And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount : and the LORD called Moses, *to encourage him,* [up] to the top of the mount ; and Moses went up. *This was a remarkable instance of resolution, a great triumph of faith in God, and showed*
 21 *a full persuasion of his mission.* And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. *(How much tenderness and compassion does God mingle with all his glory and majesty.)*
 22 And let the priests, also, *the firstborn, or some illustrious princes, or heads of tribes, who might officiate on this occasion,* which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them. And Moses
 23 said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai : for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. *They had been already sufficiently admonished, but God knowing their dulness and hardness of heart,*
 24 *saw it necessary to repeat it again.* And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee, *who is soon to be constituted high priest ; and this will prove his mission, and secure the respect of the people to him :* but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest he break forth upon them.
- 25 So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them, *stayed with them, or near enough within the bounds to speak to them, while God declared the law, as in the next chapter.*

* What a voice must this be, that six hundred thousand men, beside women and children, should hear it so plainly ! No wonder it threw them into the greatest consternation. The people trembled before at the sound, but now Moses said, *I exceedingly fear and quake.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us admire and adore the majesty of God, thus so remarkably displayed. The Son of God, being vested with divine authority, and acting as the ambassador and representative of the Father, came down with such pomp and splendor, to publish the law. *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels : the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, the holy place. Psalm lxxviii. 17.* Let us reverence the Son of God, who hath such honour conferred upon him ; and learn, if Jehovah's representative was so attended on this occasion, how glorious must Jehovah himself be, who dwells in light inaccessible ! Justly may we ask with the Psalmist, *What ailed thee, O Sinai, that thou trembledest ? Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams ? And ye little hills, like lambs ?* And justly may we reply, *Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.*

2. How terrible will the punishment of those be, who violate the law which was given with such solemnity ! *He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy ; he that came near the mount, was put to death.* How awful is God in his judgments, and how careful to maintain the honour of his law ! When we consider the breadth and extent of the commands which he now delivered, and which, being of a moral nature, are binding upon us, let us be afraid of his righteous judgments, and labour to continue in *all things written in the book of the law, to do them.*

3. We should adore the condescension and goodness of God in taking the Jews to be his peculiar people, when *all the earth was the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* He had little reason to choose them, for they were a perverse and rebellious people. Let us be thankful, that christians are admitted to the same privileges ; that the Gentiles are taken in ; that we, in this distant land, are so highly favoured, when all the earth is his. We enjoy nobler privileges than the Jews, *are made kings and priests to God, and are brought nigh by the blood of Christ.* Let us attend to the apostle's inference from this thought ; *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.* 1 Pet. ii. 9.

4. Let us consider the obligations which the goodness of God lay us under, to receive the law at his mouth. He hath delivered us from spiritual enemies, out of Egyptian darkness and tyranny. He bears us, as it were *on eagles' wings* ; hath exercised his power and care toward us, and raised us to exalted privileges and hopes. It is therefore reasonable we should say, as Israel did, v. 8. *All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.*

5. Let us all be solicitous to sanctify ourselves, and prepare for the solemn seasons of approaching to God. We come every sabbath to hear his law ; God speaks to us in his word, as plainly as he did on Sinai. Let us be thankful that such favours are conferred upon us, that we are admitted near to God ; *and therefore cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.* 'He that would profitably worship the gods,' saith an heathen philosopher, 'must not worship them *by the bye*, but with previous thought.' We should maintain such a reverent sense of his presence, and of our relation to him, that we may offer a reasonable sacrifice whenever we approach to him. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that come nigh unto him.*

CHÁP. XX.

The ten commandments are given ; the terror of the people, and the address of Moses to them, on that occasion ; with some particular cautions and directions about divine worship.

- 1 **A**ND God spake all these words immediately by himself ; spake with a voice, which, Paul tells us, shook the earth ; this numerous assembly of near two millions of people* heard it,
- 2 saying, I, the almighty, self-existent, immutable Jehovah, [am] the LORD thy God and king, and stand in a peculiar relation to thee ; which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and therefore thou art in gratitude
- 3 bound to obey me. Thou shalt have no other gods before me ; thou shalt believe in no other, and worship no other god ; prefer none other to me, nor set up any in comparison with me, not even in thy heart ; for as all is naked and open before me, I shall see
- 4 it, and be highly displeased at it. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth. Thou shalt make no likeness of God, or angels, or beasts, or fishes, to worship them.†
- 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them ;‡ for I the LORD thy God [am] a jealous God, tender of my honour, and will bear no rival, nor give my glory to another, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the

* Including men, women and children.

† The first command forbids all feigned gods, this second forbids all feigned service of the true God ; all representations of him, or worshipping him by images. This was a necessary caution, because the Egyptians worshipped beasts and fishes. This also forbids any pretended medium of worship, any worship of God through images, idols, or angels.

‡ Here is a remarkable gradation. Thou shalt not make them thyself, nor bow to them in other places, though made by other persons ; thou shalt not pay them any kind of respect, much less worship them and offer sacrifices to them.

third and fourth [generation] of them that hate me ; all idol-
 aters do so, whatever they pretend ; I know it, and will punish
 them for it : and these judgments shall affect their children to the
 third and fourth generation, if they continue in the sins of their
 6 fathers : And showing mercy unto thousands of generations
 7 of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou
 shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain ; shalt
 not swear by it falsely, nor use it irreverently ; thou shalt not
 trifle with it in worship, nor in common discourse ; for the
 LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in
 vain ; whatever men do, however magistrates may overlook it,
 be assured that God will punish it. It is impossible that men
 should always discover perjury, or fraud, or hypocrisy ; but I
 8 know it, and will severely punish it. Remember* the sabbath
 day, to keep it holy. Remember it, consider it well, lay it to
 heart, and so order all thy affairs, as not to hinder the observa-
 tion of it. Remember it, to keep it holy ; by careful abstinence
 from servile works, and worldly businesses, and by diligently em-
 ploying it in holy thoughts, words, and works ; in the worship of
 God, both public and private, and in furthering your own
 9 and others' sanctification and salvation. Six days shalt thou
 11 labour, and do all thy work : But the seventh day [is] the
 sabbath of the LORD thy God, is set apart by him from the
 beginning, and is consecrated to his service and honour ; [in it]
 thou shalt not do any work, any common worldly business, or
 take unnecessary journeys, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daugh-
 ter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle,
 nor thy stranger that [is] within thy gates, the Gentiles that
 11 sojourn with thee : For [in] six days the LORD made heaven
 and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is,] and rested the
 seventh day, from works of creation, though not of providence
 and grace : wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day,† and
 hallowed it : He blessed it, that is, made it a day of blessing,
 when men should enjoy his favour, reflect on his goodness, and
 have the means of the highest happiness : he separated it from
 the rest of the days, and from all common employments, and con-
 12 secrated it to his own holy service, and to man's holy use.‡ Hon-
 our thy father and thy mother, honour them in thy heart ; re-
 verence, fear, and love them ; honour them in thy actions, by
 obedience to their instructions ; supplying their wants, covering

* The word remember, shows that the sabbath was instituted before this time ; it is the
 reviving of an old law.

† Not the seventh day from the creation, but the day of religious rest, whether the
 Jewish or Christian sabbath ; and the change thereof seems to be hereby intimated. These
 commands relate to God and his worship ; what follow, relate to our neighbour ; and they
 are called the second table.

‡ See Orton's Religious Exercises Recommended : or, Discourses on Secret and Family
 Worship, and the Religious Observation of the Lord's Day. With two Discourses on the
 Heavenly State, considered under the idea of a Sabbath. The second edition, price 3s. A
 book, says an eminent divine of the Church of England, which well deserves the frequent
 and attentive perusal of every serious Christian.

- their infirmities, and showing all respect and duty to them :** that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy
- 13 God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill ; *Thou shalt forbear all revengeful, angry thoughts (Mat. v. 21, 22. 1 John iii. 15.) and do all thou canst to preserve thy own life, and the lives of*
- 14 *others. Thou shalt not commit adultery ;† thou shalt shun all means, occasions, and appearances of uncleanness ; and exercise chastity in thought, affection, words, attire, and gesture.*
- 15 Thou shalt not steal, *not take away another man's goods by deceit or violence, or without his knowledge and consent : nor use any fraudulent dealing, (1 Thess. iv. 6.) but give every one his*
- 16 *due. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,*
- 17 *nor speak an untruth upon any occasion whatsoever. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's ; not give way to the inward motions of thy heart toward that which is evil, (Rom. vii. 7.) particularly not to an inordinate desire of that which is thy neighbour's ; but be fully content with thy own condition, Heb. xiii. 5.‡*
- 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking ; and when the people saw [it,] they removed, and stood afar off.
- 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear : but let not God speak with us, lest we die. *The terror of the sound overwhelmed them, and they feared lest the fire, out of which the voice came, should consume them.*
- 20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not, *no harm shall come unto you : for God is come to prove you, to see whether this appearance will influence your minds, and impress you with a sense of his majesty, as the best foundation of obedience ; and that his fear*
- 21 *may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses, full of faith and confidence in God, drew near unto the thick darkness where God [was.]*
- 22 And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven ; *ye have heard my voice, but ye have seen no*
- 23 *shape or appearance of me ; therefore, Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of*
- 24 *gold, to worship me by, or together with me. An altar of earth*

* It refers primarily to our parents, and includes all superiors in authority, whether in the family, the church, or the state, and all superiors in age, in gifts, or grace. This is the first command with a promise, which was peculiarly suited to the Jews, and directed their views toward Canaan.

† Only one species of uncleanness is mentioned, because that was peculiarly abominable, but it includes all others.

‡ This is a key to open the meaning of all the other commands, and shows that God regards the temper of mind, as well as the outward action. It will be proper to read here, our Lord's sermon on the mount, to observe how he illustrates and explains these precepts, and by what arguments he enforces them; for he came not to destroy this law, but to fulfil and establish it.

thou shalt make unto me; *no high altar or pyramid, with engravings and hieroglyphics, but a low, humble altar of earth shalt thou make, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name, and fix my solemn worship, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee, give thee the testimony of my approbation and acceptance.* And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us pray that God would write all these laws on our hearts; teach us our duty to him, to ourselves, and to others; teach us to do well, and lead us in the way in which we should go, in the way of peace and holiness. *The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just and good: but we need his aid to help us to observe them, and his mercy, to pardon our many breaches of them; for we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* Let the law be a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; who by his spirit can so renew and sanctify our minds, that obedience will be a delight. Then shall we, not from a principle of terror, but from a principle of love, obey all the commandments from our heart.

2. Let us be thankful that the gospel, that better dispensation, is given in so gentle a manner; not amidst thunder and lightning, tempest and fire; but by the Son of God, the great mediator, arrayed in human flesh, who hath spoken to us with all gentleness and compassion. His terrors do not fall on us, neither doth his dread make us afraid. The apostle introduces this thought in a most beautiful manner, *Heb. xii. 18—25. For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded. And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)* But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse

not him that speaketh in such a gentle manner ; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.

CHAP. XXI.

In the former chapter, we had God's moral laws, which is of eternal obligation, delivered with awful majesty ; and are now entering on those political laws, by which God, as their king, governed the Jewish nation.

- 1 **N**OW these [are] the judgments, or judicial laws, which
 2 thou shalt set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew
 servant,* six years he shall serve : and in the seventh he
 shall go out free for nothing ; *except the year of jubilee come*
between, and then he shall go out free, though he hath served but
 3 *one year.* If he came in by himself, he shall go out by him-
 self : if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.
 4 If his master have given him a wife, a *heathen bond woman*
(for such only with their children might be left in servitude,
Lev. xxv. 44.) and she have borne him sons or daughters ;
 the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall
 go out by himself. *This was designed to discourage the mar-*
riage of the Israelites with strangers.
 5 And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my
 6 wife, and my children ; I will not go out free : Then his
 master shall bring him unto the judges, or governors ;† he
 shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post : and
 his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, to denote
 his perpetual obligation to abide in that house, and there to hear
 and obey his master's commands ; and he shall serve him for
 ever, till the year of jubilee, Lev. xxv. 40.
 7 And if a man through extreme poverty, (*as was the case on*
their return from Babylon, Neh. v. 5.) sell his daughter to be a
 maid servant, in expectation of her marrying her master, or
 his son, she shall not go out as the men servants do, *but upon*
 8 *better terms.* If she please not her master, who hath betroth-
 ed her to himself, (*or rather, so that he doth not betroth her to*
himself,) then shall he let her be redeemed, *by any relation or*
 friend that is so disposed : to sell her unto a strange nation he
 shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

* This might be done when he sold himself for poverty, Deut. xv. 12. Lev. xxv. 39. when he was sold by the magistrate for theft, ch. xxii. 3. or in case of debt, 1 Kings iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 25.

† Perpetual servitude was too important a matter for a private bargain : it had to be done before the magistrate, as a proof that the man was willing.

- 9 And if he hath betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters, *by giving her a dowry, (chap. xxii. 16, 17,) and all the other privileges of a free woman.* If he take him another [wife ;] her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then she shall go out free without money for her redemption.
- 12 He that smiteth a man *willfully*, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver [him] into his hand *by some special, unexpected providence* ; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee. But if a man come presumptuously, *purposedly, and maliciously*, upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile ; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die ; for God will not have his altar to be a refuge for murderers. And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death, *though he kill them not.*
- 16 And he that stealeth a man, *an Israelite, (Deut. xxiv. 7.)* and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.
- 17 And he that curseth his father, or his mother, *that wishes any mischief may befall them, or uses any kind of malicious, reviling speeches, which argue a contempt of his parents,* shall surely be put to death.
- 18 And if men strive together, and one smite another, with a stone, or with [his] fist, and he die not, but keepeth [him] bed :
- 19 If he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote [him,] be quit : only he shall pay [for] the loss of his time, and shall cause [him] to be thoroughly healed.
- 20 And if a man smite his servant, his slave, or his maid, with a rod, *any instrument fit for correction,* and he die under his hand ; he shall be surely punished *by the magistrates.* Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished : for he [is] his money, *his property, and he had a right to correct him in a proper manner.*
- 22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, *who interposes in the quarrel,* so that her fruit depart [from her,] and yet no other mischief follow : he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him ; and he shall pay as the judges [determine.] And if [any] other mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. *This was the law of retaliation, which might be put into execution, if the person doing the injury did not make satisfaction.*
- 26 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish ; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake. And if he smite out his man servant's tooth, or his

maid servant's tooth ; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake. *This was designed to prevent cruelty, and to make men cautious not to exceed in due correction, or do any thing in a passion.*

- 28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die : then the ox shall be surely stoned, *to prevent his doing further mischief*, and his flesh shall not be eaten ; but the owner of
 29 the ox [shall be] quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or woman ; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death, *because he did not take proper care to prevent this.**
 30 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is
 31 laid upon him. Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done
 32 unto him. If the ox shall push a man servant, or maid servant ; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, *three pounds eight shillings sterling*, and the ox shall be stoned.
 33 And if a man shall open a pit in *the highway or unenclosed grounds*, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an
 34 ox or an ass fall therein ; The owner of the pit shall make [it] good, [and] give money unto the owner of them ; and the dead [beast] shall be his.
 35 And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die ; then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it ; and the
 36 dead [ox] also they shall divide. Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in ; he shall surely pay ox for ox ; and the dead shall be his own.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be thankful for the good laws by which our lives and properties are preserved ; that we are not subject to the malice and violence of wicked and unreasonable men ; that we are not like the fish of the sea, where the greater devour the less. We live under a good government, where our lives and property are secure ; and those who by violence or fraud take it away, will receive just punishment. Blessed be God, who hath so well fixed the bounds of our habitation ; that we live in a free land ; are not subject to bondage, nor at the mercy of merciless tyrants ; *the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places.*

2. How observant should christians be of all the rules of equity and law ! Many of these laws are happily superseded and laid

* There is an old English law that makes it felony to let a mischievous beast go loose.

aside, by the laws of our country and the rules of the gospel : but they teach us this important lesson, *to do justice, and love mercy ; to render unto all their due ;* and to be careful that we do not injure any, even by negligence. Let masters and mistresses learn to treat their servants with all gentleness and humanity. If these directions were given with relation to slaves, who were their master's property, being bought and sold ; how much more reasonable is it that we should observe them to servants who become so by their own voluntary choice and consent ! God will not allow his people to trample even on slaves. It becomes us to be courteous to all men, but especially to servants, that the burden of their situation may become as easy as possible. *Let christian masters, according to Paul's directions, give to their servants that which is right, forbearing threatening ; knowing they have a master in heaven, with whom there is no respect of persons.* Let those who tyrannize over their servants, or treat their domestics roughly, or cruelly, ask themselves that striking question, which Job did himself, and gives it as a reason for tenderness to his servants, *What shall I do when God riseth up ? When he visiteth, what shall I answer ?*

CHAP. XXII.

Contains many other political laws for the government of the Israelites.

- 1 **I**F a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, or goat, and kill it, or sell it ; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.* *This was a necessary law, considering how much their wealth lay in cattle.* If a thief be found breaking up a house by night, and be smitten that he die, [there shall] no blood [be shed] for him ; *it shall not be considered as murder.* If the sun be risen upon him, [there shall be] blood [shed] for him ; *it shall then be reckoned murder, because the master of the house might see who he was, be able to pursue him, and bring him to judgment ; [for] he should make full restitution ; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft, for six years.* If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep ; he shall restore double, *namely, that which was stolen, and another as good, or the full value of it.*
- 5 If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, or through neglect suffer him to trespass,

* The general law of restitution was to be double, if the beast was found alive ; but if slain or sold, four or five fold, because it was more difficult to prove the property. There was to be an ox more than a sheep, because the owner lost his labour while detained.

and shall feed in another man's field ; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution. *This was very proper, considering their circumstances in the wilderness.*

- 6 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed [there-with ;] he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution. *This was designed to make them watchful and cautious, especially with so dangerous an element.*
- 7 If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, on trust, and for no reward, but out of friendship, and it be stolen out of the man's house ; if the thief be found, let him pay double.
- 8 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, [to see] whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods, *or was any way accessory to the loss of them.*
- 9 For all manner of trespass about matters deposited upon trust, and lost, [whether it be] for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, [or] for any manner of lost thing, which [another] challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges ; [and] whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbour.
- 10 If a man deliver unto his neighbour *for hire*, an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep ; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away,
- 11 no man seeing [it :] [Then] shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, *there shall be a solemn appeal to God, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods, to injure or destroy them ;* and the owner of it shall accept [thereof,]
- 12 and he shall not make [it] good. And if it be stolen from him, *through his neglect,* he shall make restitution unto the
- 13 owner thereof. If it be torn in pieces, [then] let him bring *some part or limb of it* [for] witness,* [and] he shall not make good that which was torn.
- 14 And if a man borrow [ought] *any beast* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof [being] not with it,
- 15 he shall surely make [it] good. [But] if the owner thereof [be] with it, *and was careful about it,* he shall not make [it] good : if it [be] an hired [thing,] it came for his hire, *and he shall pay that and no more.*
- 16 And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie
- 17 with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins, *according to his estate and circumstances, as dowries used to be given with maids of like condition.*

* Or, as ancient versions render it. *He shall bring a witness to prove that some evil befall with the beast, or, that he had always been careful about it in time past.*

- 18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch, *a person who pretends to have commerce with evil spirits*, to live.*
- 19 Whosoever lieth with a beast, shall surely be put to death.
- 20 He that sacrificeth unto [any] god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed, *be under a solemn execration, and be put to death.*†
- 21 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him, *neither reproach nor taunt him, nor oppress him in his dealings, but let him live peaceably among you* : for ye were strangers
- 22 in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child, *shall give them no trouble in thought, word, or deed, in this their helpless condition.* If thou afflict them in
- 23 any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry, and *plead their cause* ; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.
- 25 If thou lend money to [any of] my people [that is] poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.‡ *This was designed to promote love and benevolence among them.*
- 26 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment *that is poor* to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down : For that [is] his covering only, it [is] his raiment for his skin, *his bedquilt or coverlet* : wherein shall he sleep ? *the want of it may endanger his health, or his life* : and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear ; for I [am] gracious, *and would have you be like me.*
- 28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, *or judges*, nor curse the ruler of thy people, *not speak evil of them falsely, or expose them to the contempt of the people ; not breed divisions, or stir up sedition.*
- 29 Thou shalt not delay *beyond the time appointed* [to offer] the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors, *thy wine and oil* ; the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me, *that is,*
- 30 *the price of their redemption.* Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, [and] with thy sheep : seven days it shall be with his dam ; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.
- 31 And ye shall be holy men unto me, *shall lead holier lives*

* Whether there was any thing real in their pretensions or not, they were justly punished, because they were a kind of idolaters, and paid that honour to evil spirits which was due only to God. It is most probable that it was all a cheat and juggle ; but in this view they were punishable.

† God was in an extraordinary manner their king and governor : idolaters were his rivals : to have tolerated them would have defeated the end for which they were separated from other nations ; it would have been encouraging rebellion ; and therefore they were as justly punished, as traitors in other countries.

‡ Usury, or interest for money, is not unlawful in itself. There is no reason why a man may not take money for the use of money, as well as for oxen, horses, or land. The Jews might do this from strangers, but not from their poor neighbours and brethren.

than others : neither shall ye eat [any] flesh [that is] torn of beasts in the field, because there was blood in it, and to teach them to abhor cruelty : ye shall cast it to the dogs. We are not concerned in many of these laws, but the chapter affords us the following

REFLECTIONS.

1. **I**T should be our care to avoid the occasion of undesigned mischief ; this people seldom think of. If a man injures his neighbour carelessly, he is chargeable with guilt in the sight of God. Persons are apt to make light of imprudences ; but it becomes us to be cautious, to be tender of our neighbour's property and reputation, and to walk circumspectly.

2. It is of the greatest importance, that we keep up a reverence for an oath. The want of this is one of the crying sins of our land, it is a national iniquity. Nothing is more common than for persons to forswear themselves on almost any occasion. An oath before a magistrate is lawful ; but should always be taken with the greatest seriousness. Let us lament that oaths are so much trifled with in our country. Appealing to God is a most solemn thing ; and our brethren in Scotland are worthy of praise, whose oaths are administered with the greatest seriousness and solemnity, and so are most likely to answer the end designed by them.

3. Let us learn to be gentle and compassionate to all, especially to the afflicted and distressed. Gentle to servants, not treating them hardly for a mischance, as if it were a fault, and make them accountable for what they could not help. *v. 10, 11. If a man deliver to his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep ; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it : then shall an oath of the Lord be between them both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods ; and the owner of it shall accept thereof, and he shall not make it good.* There are some accidents, which the greatest care cannot prevent. Let us also learn to be compassionate to strangers : the reason which is too often given for not pitying and relieving them is, 'because they are strangers ; we do not know who they are ;' but this is a reason why we should show compassion. The motive urged upon Israel, is equally binding upon us. *We were once strangers and foreigners, but now fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.* Let us sympathize with, and help the fatherless and the widow. It is not sufficient that we do not oppress them ; we should pity, and relieve them. *God is the father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widow : he will plead their cause, and hear their cry.* Learn therefore to value their prayers ; for, on the same principle, if they pray for, and recommend their benefactors.

to the divine blessing, God will hear them. Let us guard against biting usury, as the word signifies in v. 25. that is, extortion ; taking pledges, where we should give and lend freely ; keeping them beyond the proper time ; exacting more than the bargain, or demanding more than is just and equitable. All these are scandalous things, and the anger of God waxeth hot against such cruel oppressors : *they shall have judgment without mercy, who have showed no mercy.*

4. Let us maintain the honour of rulers, and not be forward in censuring and reviling them. Sometimes indeed, their conduct may be so wrong, that we cannot help seeing it. Let us lament it before God in prayer, especially their immorality, and entreat that he would give them a better mind. It does not become us to revile them ; that would be doing mischief, and be apt to spread dissension and clamour. This petulant spirit, of rashly censuring every measure of government, is a great fault in the present day ; but be it far from us. God hath honoured magistrates by his own name ; he hath called them gods ; and invested them with part of his authority. Let us show that we fear God, by honouring the king, and being subject to magistrates, not only for wrath, but conscience sake ; and not increase their burdens, which are heavy enough already, and which all their honours and profits cannot balance.

5. Let young people give God the prime of their days without delay. This is intimated by his requiring the first ripe fruits, v. 29. God's soul discerns this, and is particularly pleased with it ; therefore they should devote their time and strength to his service, *whose they are, and whom they ought to serve ;* and do it immediately, *lest their hearts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* Let God, who is the best of beings, be served with our best ; and let us all learn to glorify him with our bodies and our spirits, *which are his.*

CHAP. XXIII.

The political laws respecting slander and false witness ; the sabbath ; idolatry ; and a blessing promised to the obedient.

- 1 **T**HOU shalt not raise or receive a false report, shalt not go by hearsay evidence, nor give credit to every idle report : put not thine hand, do not conspire or agree with the wicked, to be an unrighteous witness.
- 2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude, the great men, either their counsel or example, to [do] evil ; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest [judgment,]
- 3 not give false judgment because the many do so : Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause ; but do right, without respect of persons.

- 4 If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass, or any other beast, going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again.
- 5 If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, or, *wouldst thou cease to help him?* thou shalt surely help with him; *though he be at difference with thee, yet join with him to help the beast: so shalt thou oblige thine enemy, and dispose him to reconciliation.*
- 6 Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause, *not oppress or injure a poor man, because he is poor, nor*
- 7 *deny him common justice.* Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not, *and for the same reason inflict no other punishment on them;* for I will not justify the wicked, *that is, wicked judges; though they may escape in this world, I will judge them in another, severely and openly.*
- 8 And thou shalt take no gift, *not only no bribe, but no gifts or presents of any kind;* for the gift blindeth the wise, *corrupts the judgment, that it cannot or will not discern between right and wrong, and perverteth the words of the righteous, makes*
- 9 *good men pass a wrong sentence.** Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, *their dejection and distress, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.*
- 10 And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: But the seventh [year] thou shalt let it rest and lie still; *not so much that it may get strength, as to teach you that both yourselves and your land are God's! that the poor of thy people may eat whatever grows of itself from the seed that was scattered the last plentiful years:† and then all, both poor and rich, may have time to study and hear the law, which was then to be read in a solemn manner to all the people; and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, [and] with thy oliveyard, thou shalt leave the produce of them for the poor. But lest they should think that the weekly rest was to cease on that year, the command is renewed.*
- 12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger may be refreshed.‡
- 13 And in all [things] that I have said unto you be circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth; *endeavour entirely to forget them, lest ye be seduced by them.*

* The Roman and Grecian laws agreed in this, that judges should accept no gift or present, but their settled salary only.

† It is to be remembered, that in the sixth year, their land was to bring forth enough for that year, and the year of rest, and the next year after that, till the new corn was ripe. This Moses foretold, and it was a convincing proof of the divine authority of his law; for nothing could have been more imprudent in human policy, than to have left the ground fallow every seventh year, with such a promise of plenty beforehand, if he had not had divine authority for doing it.

‡ There were three sorts of sabbaths or times of rest to the Jews; weekly, every seventh year, and the jubilee, every fiftieth year.

- 24 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year,
 25 *in spring, summer, and autumn* : Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread :* (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the
 26 month Abib ; for in it thou camest out from Egypt † and none shall appear before me empty, ‡ *but shall bring oblations and provisions for the priest :* §) And the feast of harvest, (*which was the second and greatest feast, seven weeks after the former*) in the beginning of wheat harvest, thou shalt bring the first fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in thy field : and the feast of ingathering [which is] in the end of the year, *which was their third great feast, at the end of harvest*, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field, *then thou shalt bring the first fruits of thy wine*
 27 *and oil*. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the LORD God, *that is, those who were of competent years, and at their own disposal.* †
 28 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, *as the heathens do in the worship of their idols* ; neither
 29 shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk. ‡
 30 Behold, I send an Angel, *my messenger, that is, Christ*, before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the
 31 place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not ; for he will not pardon your transgressions, *but will punish you for them* ; for my name [is] in him, *he acts by my authority, and we are intimately united,* (John
 32 x. 30.) But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak ; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries, *or, I will afflict them that afflict thee.*
 33 For mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites : and I will cut them off. Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, *pay them neither outward nor inward worship*, nor do after their works : but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images, *and all monuments of idol-*
 34 *atry.* And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall

* This was joined to the passover, ch. xii. 18.

† Some render it, *none shall appear before me in vain* ; intimating that God would accept and reward their services.

‡ At those times, all their frontiers were unguarded, and it would have been the ruin of their country, if God had not promised by a special providence to preserve it then.

§ Dr. Cudworth tells us, that it was the custom of idolaters at the end of harvest, to take the broth of a kid, boiled in the milk of its dam, and sprinkle the fields, as a libation or thank offering to the deity which they supposed presided over them. God says, thou shalt not do thus. And, by the way, this shows us how wise and rational many of the laws of the Jews were, though, for want of being better acquainted with the ancient heathen customs, we cannot at present understand, or see the reasonableness of them.

- bless thy bread, and thy water, *all thy provisions, and give them power to nourish thee* ; and I will take sickness away from
 26 the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land : the number of thy days I will fulfil,
 27 *thou shalt live to a good old age.* I will send my fear before thee, *strike terror into the hearts of thine enemies,* and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will
 28 make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee. And I will send hornets before thee, *a large kind of wasps, terrible creatures,* which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee. *Those nations are just for the*
 29 *rest, because they were the most powerful.* I will not drive them out from before thee in one year ; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.
 31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea, even unto the sea of the Philistines, *the Mediterranean sea,* and from the desert of Arabia, or Paran, unto the river Euphrates : for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand ; and thou shalt drive them out before thee. *This was accomplished in the times of David and Solomon, and not before, because of*
 32 *their disobedience.* Thou shalt make no covenant with them,
 33 nor with their gods. They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me : for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee, *an occasion of further sin, and utter ruin.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E hence see the wisdom of being religious, whatever it may cost us. God is ever ready to protect his servants in the way of duty ; he preserved the Israelites in going to Jerusalem, without danger of invasion, or loss of their substance ; he promised he would bless them, drive out their enemies, and give them all desirable prosperity. See hence how acceptable obedience is to God, and how able and ready he is to promote the real interests of those who sincerely serve him ; *he will be an enemy to their enemies,* and espouse their cause. If we adhere to him, he will bless our comforts, and give them a relish, and deliver us from those things which are burdensome in his service. We have neither such feasts to attend, nor such long journeys to go to his house, nor the great expense of lodgings, provision, &c. to bear. The law of God is now known more entirely, *and his commandments are not grievous.* If his will seems in any instance inconvenient, a resolute compliance with it will be our highest wisdom ; *for godliness is profitable unto all things,*

having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

2. See how much religion consists in justice and humanity, and how tender God is of the property and reputation of his creatures, yea, of the welfare of the brute creation. Let us keep ourselves far from a false matter ; not be free in censuring others, or raising a false report ; nor assert a thing is so and so, when we only suspect, or fear it. We should not readily receive an evil report ; it is inconsistent with that charity which *hopeth all things*. Let us discourage talebearers, drive them away by an angry countenance ; and be careful in this and every other instance, *not to follow a multitude to do evil*. Let us not be ashamed to be singularly religious. Being on the side on which numbers are, will not vindicate our conduct. Their sins will not excuse ours ; nor will their torments lessen our own. Let us therefore set our faces like a flint in God's way ; and though we should be scorned and reproached for our singularity, *let none of these things move us, neither should we count our lives dear unto us, so that we may finish our course with joy.*

CHAP. XXIV.

This chapter is preparatory to the giving of the ceremonial laws ; Moses is called up into the mountain ; the people promise obedience ; and the glory of God appeareth.

- 1 **A**ND he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, and his two eldest sons, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel ; *probably such as were chosen out by Jethro's advice ; and worship ye afar off. The people were to worship at a distance, the elders and priests to approach nearer.* And Moses alone shall come near the LORD : but they shall not come nigh ; neither shall the people go up with him.
- 2 And Moses, *after these directions,* came down and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments, *that is, the ten commandments, and all that was delivered in the last three chapters :* and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said, will we
- 3 do. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD in a book, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar, *which represented God, the first and chief party in the covenant,* under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of
- 4 Israel, *to represent the people.* And he sent young men of the children of Israel, *persons fit for service, probably the first-born, who were priests, till the Levites were taken in their*

- stead, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put [it] in basons ; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. *The blood was divided between the altar and the people, to denote the mutual stipulation between God and*
- 7 *them.* And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, *or perhaps the heads of the people :* and they said, All that the LORD hath said, will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled [it] on *such*
- 8 *of the people as were near him,* and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words : *you are obliged by this blood to observe the covenant ; or, this blood is a sign and seal of the covenant. There is a plain reference in this to the Messiah, and the blessings of his covenant ; see Heb. ix. 18—20.**
- 9 Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and
- 10 seventy of the elders of Israel : And they saw the God of Israel, *some glimpse of his glory, some illustrious representation of him :* and [there was] under his feet, *below him,* as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, *a mixture of blue and gold,* and as it were the body of heaven in [his] clearness, *like a*
- 11 *clear sky spangled with stars.* And upon the nobles, *those elders of the children of Israel,* he laid not his hand ;† also they saw God, and did eat and drink *of their sacrifices, v. 5. rejoicing in the goodness of God to them, and the honour he had done them.*
- 12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there : and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written ; that thou mayest teach them. *This should have engaged their perpetual*
- 13 *reverence for a man who was so highly honoured.* And Moses rose up and his minister Joshua, *who was to be his successor ;* and Moses went up into the mount of God.
- 14 And *before he went up* he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you : and, behold, Aaron and Hur [are] with you : if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them.
- 15 And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered
- 16 the mount. And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days ; *during which time, Moses, and probably Joshua with him, waited before the cloud, to exercise their humility and devotion, and prepare them for the manifestation :* and the seventh day, *on the sabbath,* he
- 17 called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the

* It was a common form of making a covenant among the heathens, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on each party ; and it contained, as is generally thought, a secret wish, that their blood might be poured out if they were unfaithful.

† That is, they did not die ; alluding to a common opinion, that if God appeared to any one, he would soon die.

plight of the glory of the LORD [was] like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel, like light and flame breaking out of the dark cloud.

- 18 And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount, while Joshua stood near the bottom of the mount, between Moses and the people : and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights, without eating or drinking, supported by the miraculous power and presence of God. This circumstance gave an air of majesty to the giving of the law, and intimated, that the design of it was something very great and mysterious.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us receive with thankful submission, all intimations of the divine will : *All that the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient, v. 7.* This is our duty, for God commands nothing but what is reasonable, important, and advantageous. Obedience is highly becoming us. This should be our language, when the book of God is read, or his word preached, *All that the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient.* We should not only form this resolution, but keep it ; and *be doers of his word, not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.*

2. Let us be willing to be as express as possible in renewing our covenant with God ; consider the requirements of it ; all the words concerning which it was made ; study the extent of it ; endeavour to understand every particular ; that we may know what to do, and what to expect. This will make our vows rational, and more likely to be lasting.

3. Let us remember in how awful a manner our covenant with God is ratified ; with blood, even *the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus* ; to which there is an allusion in what Moses did. His blood is the seal of the covenant ; confirms it on God's part, and assures us that he will be faithful to the contents of it. Christ is the mediator of the new covenant, as Moses was of this. His blood is called *the blood of the everlasting covenant.* Let us remember it so as to promote our humility and confirm our faith ; especially at the Lord's Supper, in the original celebration of which, Christ is thought to allude to this passage, when he says, *This cup is the New Testament, or covenant, in my blood ;* it represents my blood, with which the covenant is sealed. When we remember the death of Christ, let us remember the covenant sealed by it ; take encouragement from thence, and be animated by it to obedience.

4. Let us admire the condescension of God, in manifesting himself in so gracious a manner to sinful creatures ; exhibiting his majesty and glory with so much splendour, and yet with so much mildness, that we may not be hurt or terrified, that his

terrors may not fall on us, nor his excellency make us afraid. We have reason to be thankful, that we are allowed to approach to God, and to enjoy communion with him. Let us esteem this a great privilege, and admire that grace which allows it. But,

5. Let us not lay too great a stress on any external privileges in religion. These elders saw the glory of God: what greater honour could they enjoy! yet their carcasses fell in the wilderness, and Nadab and Abihu were consumed by divine vengeance; their privileges were of no avail. What would it avail us to be thus favoured, or to eat and drink in his presence, if we continue disobedient? It would only aggravate our folly and ingratitude. It will be in vain to say, *Lord, we have eaten and drank in thy presence*, and been admitted to the nearest approaches to thee; should he reply, *I know you not, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*.

6. We have reason to entertain venerable notions of the Mosaic dispensation, which was established with such pomp, and came directly from God's mouth. It was an excellent dispensation, well suited to the circumstances of the people, and to promote the knowledge and worship of God, and faith in a Messiah to come. Let us not entertain light notions of it, as if it was trifling and ridiculous; if any thing in it appears so, it is owing to our ignorance. Let us reverence the voice of God, that spake on mount Sinai; and be thankful for that purer and plainer revelation, which we have. May we reverence the law which was given by Moses, and endeavour to understand it; but especially reverence, love, understand, and be obedient to, *that grace which came by Jesus Christ. Amen.*

CHAP. XXV.

*God having delivered the moral and judicial laws, now comes to the ceremonial. In this chapter is an account of the offering of the tabernacle; the form of the ark; the mercy seat; the table, and candlestick.**

1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
2 the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering:
of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart
3 ye shall take my offering. And this [is] the offering which

* In the original manuscript, there is no enlargement or reflections from this chapter to the thirty second, for which the author gives the following reason: 'I omit the chapters between the twenty fourth and the thirty third, because they relate entirely to building and furnishing the tabernacle; to the dress of the priests, and the like; things in which we have but little concern. Critical niceties may be dispensed with in such a work as this; and the inferences drawn from them, often contain so much of allusion and metaphor, so forced and strained, as hath done great dishonour to the sacred writings.' The few illustrations, which the reader will find in these and other similar chapters, are chiefly taken from *Clarke* and *Doddridge's* manuscript notes, &c.

- 4 ye shall take of them ; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet-wool, and fine linen, and goats' [hair,]
 5 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, (*thought to be a kind of cedar, whereof Solomon's temple was built, 1 Kings vi. 9, 10.*) Oil for the light, spices for
 7 anointing oil, and for sweet incense, Onyx stones, and stones
 8 to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary, *a place of public and solemn worship ; it was a kind of moveable temple, which might be carried about with them ; that I may dwell among them, by my grace and glorious operations, as well as by this symbol of my presence.*
 9 According to all that I show thee, [after] the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make [it ;] *according to some model which Moses had seen, or which was given to him.*
 10 And they shall make an ark [of] shittim wood, *a little chest or coffer to lay up the tables of the covenant in :* two cubits and a half [shall be] the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.*
 11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about ; *a border or ledge, both for ornament, and for the covering to fall into.* And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put [them] in the four corners thereof ; and two rings [shall be] in the one side of it, and two rings in the other
 13 side of it, *to carry it by.* And thou shalt make staves [of] shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, *at the ends of the ark, (as appears from 1 Kings viii. 8. 2 Chron. v. 9.)*
 15 that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark : they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee ; *the two tables of stone, whereon the law, or ten commandments, were written.*
 17 And thou shalt make a mercy seat [of] pure gold : two cubits and a half [shall be] the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof ; *this was the covering of the ark.*
 18 And thou shalt make two cherubims [of] gold, *figures of a human shape, but with wings, to represent the angels, who continually attend upon God in heaven ;* † [of] beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end : [even] of the mercy seat, or, *of the master of the mercy seat,* shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends

* A yard and half long, and two feet nine inches broad, and high.

† Grotius and others think they came nearer to the representation of oxen, than any other form ; which might be the reason why Jeroboam's idols were in the shape of calves or oxen, 1 Kings xii. 28.

- taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple
 12 the tent together, that it may be one. And the remnant
 that remaineth of the curtain of the tent, the half curtain
 that remaineth, shall hang over the back side of the taber-
 13 nacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other
 side of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of
 the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle on this
 side, and on that side, to cover it.
- 14 And thou shalt make a covering for the tent [of] rams'
 skins dyed red, and a covering above [of] badgers' skins.
- 15 And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle [of] shit-
 16 tim wood standing up. Ten cubits, *eighteen feet three inches*,
 [shall be] the length of a board, and a cubit and a half, *two*
 17 *feet nine inches*, [shall be] the breadth of one board. Two
 tenons [shall there be] in one board, set in order one against
 another : thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the taber-
 18 nacle. And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle,
 19 twenty boards on the south side southward. And thou shalt
 make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards ; two
 sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets
 20 under another board for his two tenons. And for the second
 side of the tabernacle on the north side [there shall be] twenty
 21 boards : And their forty sockets [of] silver ; two sockets
 22 under one board, and two sockets under another board. And
 for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou shalt make six
 23 boards. And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of
 24 the tabernacle in the two sides. And they shall be coupled
 together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above
 the head of it unto one ring : thus shall it be for them both ;
 25 they shall be for the two corners. And they shall be eight
 boards, and their sockets [of] silver, sixteen sockets ; two
 sockets under one board, and two sockets under another
 26 board. And thou shalt make bars [of] shittim wood ; five
 27 for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, And five
 bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five
 bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two
 28 sides westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards
 29 shall reach from end to end. And thou shalt overlay the
 boards with gold, and make their rings [of] gold [for] places
 for the bars : and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold.
 30 And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fash-
 ion thereof which was showed thee in the mount.
- 31 And thou shalt make a veil [of] blue and purple, and scar-
 let, and fine twined linen of cunning work : with cherubims
 32 shall it be made : And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of
 shittim [wood] overlaid with gold : their hooks [shall be of]
 33 gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang
 up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither

- within the veil the ark of the testimony : and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy [place] and the most holy.
- 34 And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the tes-
- 35 timony in the most holy [place.] And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south : and thou
- 36 shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle work.
- 37 And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars [of] shittim [wood,] and overlay them with gold, [and] their hooks [shall be of] gold, and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.

CHAP. XXVII.

Contains an account of the altar of burnt offering, with the vessels ; the court of the tabernacle ; and the oil for the lamp.

- 1 **A**ND thou shalt make an altar [of] shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad ; the altar shall be foursquare, and the height thereof, [shall be] three cubits,
- 2 *five feet and a half.* And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof :* his horns, shall be of the
- 3 same : and thou shalt overlay it with brass. And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his flesh hooks, and his fire pans : all the vessels
- 4 thereof thou shalt make [of] brass. And thou shalt make
- 5 for it a grate of net work [of] brass ; and upon the net, *or grate,* shalt thou make four brazen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar.
- 6 And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves [of] shittim
- 7 wood, and overlay them with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides
- 8 of the altar, to bear it. Hollow with boards shalt thou make it : as it was showed thee in the mount, so shall they make [it.]
- 9 And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle : for the south side, southward [there shall be] hangings for the court [of] fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long, *almost sixty*
- 10 *one yards,* for one side : And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets [shall be of] brass ; the hooks of the
- 11 pillars and their fillets [shall be of] silver. And likewise for

* That is, the four risings, one at each corner, in the shape of horns, either for ornament, or to fasten the sacrifice unto.

- the north side in length [there shall be] hangings of an hundred [cubits] long, and his twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets [of] brass ; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets
 12 [of] silver. And [for] the breadth of the court, on the west side [shall be] hangings of fifty cubits : their pillars ten, and
 13 their sockets ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward [shall be] fifty cubits. The hangings of one
 14 side [of the gate shall be] fifteen cubits : their pillars three, and their sockets three. And on the other side [shall be]
 15 hangings fifteen [cubits :] their pillars three, and their sockets three. And for the gate of the court [shall be] an hanging
 16 of twenty cubits, [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle work : [and] their
 17 pillars [shall be] four, and their sockets four. All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver ; their hooks
 18 [shall be of] silver, and their sockets [of] brass. The length of the court [shall be] an hundred cubits, and the breadth
 19 fifty every where, and the height five cubits [of] fine twined linen, and their sockets [of] brass. All the vessels of the
 20 tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, [shall be of] brass.
 21 And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the
 22 lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation, *where the people used to meet, not only one with another, but with God also ; and where the priests, levites, and people assembled, according to their several degrees of approach ; without the veil, that is, the second veil in the holy place, which [is] before the ark of the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD : [it shall be] a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

Contains an account of Aaron and his sons being separated for the priest's office ; the ephod ; the Urim and Thummim.

- 1 **A**ND take thou unto thee, *solemnly set apart for this office,* Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, [even] Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazer and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.
 2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, *to be used only in holy ministrations,* for glory and for beauty,
 3 *glorious and beautiful.* And thou shalt speak unto all [that are] wise hearted, *skilful artists,* whom I have filled with the spirit

- of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.
- 4 And these [are] the garments which they shall make ; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle : and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister
- 5 unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.
- 6 And they shall make the ephod [of] gold, [of] blue, and [of] purple, [of] scarlet, and fine twined linen, with
- 7 cunning work. It shall have the two shoulder pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof ; and [so] it shall be joined
- 8 together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which [is] upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof ; [even of] gold, [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine
- 9 twined linen. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and
- 10 grave on them the names of the children of Israel : Six of their names on one stone, and [the other] six names of the
- 11 rest on the other stone, according to their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, [like] the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel : thou shalt make them to be set in ouches
- 12 of gold, *hollow places in which the stones were set fast.* And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod [for] stones of memorial unto the children of Israel : And Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD upon his two shoulders for a memorial ; *that God, seeing their names presented before him by the high priest, might graciously remember*
- 13 *them, and show mercy unto them.* And thou shalt make ouches
- 14 or sockets, [of] gold ; And two chains [of] pure gold at the ends ; [of] wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.
- 15 And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment, *whereby answers of judgment in all weighty matters were given to the people, when they consulted God for direction,* with cunning work ; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it ; [of] gold, [of] blue, and [of] purple, and [of] scarlet, and [of]
- 16 fine twined linen, thou shalt make it. Foursquare it shall be, [being] doubled ; a span [shall be] the length thereof, and a span [shall be] the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, [even] four rows of stones : [the first] row [shall be] a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle : [this shall
- 17 be] the first row. And the second row [shall be] an emerald,
- 18 a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an
- 19 agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper : they shall be set in gold in their enclos-
- 20 ings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, [like] the engravings of a signet ; every one with his name shall they

- 22 be according to the twelve tribes. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the ends [of] wreathen work
 23 [of] pure gold. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two rings on the two ends
 24 of the breastplate. And thou shalt put the two wreathen [chains] of gold in the two rings [which are] on the ends of
 25 the breastplate. And [the other] two ends of the two wreathen [chains] thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put
 26 [them] on the shoulder pieces of the ephod before it. And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate in the border thereof,
 27 which [is] in the side of the ephod inward. And thou [other] rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart thereof, over against the [other] coupling thereof, above the curious
 28 girdle of the ephod. And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that [it] may be above the curious girdle of the ephod,
 29 and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod. And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy [place,] for a memorial before the LORD continually.
- 30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummin ;* and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD : and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.
- 31 And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all [of] blue.
 32 And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof : it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, or breastplate,
 33 that it be not rent. And [beneath] upon the hem of it thou shalt make *the figure of* pomegranates [of] blue, and [of] purple, and [of] scarlet, round about the hem thereof ; and bells of gold between them round about, *by the sound of which the people might be reminded of the work the high priest was engaged in, and excited to join their affections and devotions with his :* A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden
 34 bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round
 35 about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister : and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy [place] before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not, for his disobedience or carelessness.

* What the Urim and Thummin were, is uncertain. *Wittus* supposes it was some singular piece of workmanship made immediately by God himself, because there is no mention of the making of it, as there is of every thing else. Others think that the stones themselves were called so, as being a pledge of those oracular answers which God would give, of which, the integrity and lustre of the jewels, might seem a kind of emblem. Those who wish to see more on this subject, and various other particulars relating to the priests, the tabernacle, &c. may consult *Ashworth's* and *J. King's Jewish Antiquities*, *Spencer, Wildes, Prideaux, &c.*

- 36 And thou shalt make a plate [of] pure gold, *like an half coronet*, and grave upon it, [like] the engraving of a signet,
- 37 HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre ; upon the forehead of the mitre it shall be. And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, *obtain pardon of God for the imperfections of their best duties and services*, and which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts, *shall separate or consecrate to God in all their offerings or gifts* ; and it shall be always upon his forehead, *at all times of his solemn appearance before God*, that they may be accepted before the LORD.
- 39 And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre [of] fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle [of] needle work.
- 40 And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets thou shalt make for them,
- 41 for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him ; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may
- 42 minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness ; from the
- 43 loins even unto the thighs they shall reach ; And they shall be upon Aaron and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy [place ;] that they bear not iniquity, and die, *as a punishment for it* : [it shall be] a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him.

CHAP. XXIX.

We have here an account of the sacrifice and ceremonies of consecrating the priests, and the continual burnt offering.

- 1 **A**ND this [is] the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office :
- 2 Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened, tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened, anointed with oil : [of] wheaten flour
- 3 shalt thou make them. And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the
- 4 two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.
- 5 And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod :

- 6 And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy
 7 crown upon the mitre. Then shalt thou take the anointing
 8 oil, and pour [it] upon his head, and anoint him. And thou
 9 shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. And thou
 shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the
 bonnets on them : and the priest's office shall be theirs for a
 perpetual statute, *during the continuance of the Jewish dispensation* : and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons. And
 10 thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle
 of the congregation : and Aaron and his sons shall put their
 11 hands upon the head of the bullock. And thou shalt kill the
 bullock before the LORD, [by] the door of the tabernacle of
 12 the congregation. And thou shalt take of the blood of the
 bullock, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar with thy
 finger, *that is, the brazen altar of burnt offerings, to sanctify the altar itself, that it might be fit afterward to sanctify the sacrifices of the people*, and pour all the rest of the blood beside
 13 the bottom of the altar. And thou shalt take all the fat that
 covereth the inwards, and the caul [that is] above the liver,
probably the midriff,* and the two kidneys, and the fat that [is]
 14 upon them, and burn [them] upon the altar. But the flesh
 of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn
 15 with fire without the camp : it [is] a sin offering. Thou shalt
 also take one ram : and Aaron and his sons shall put their
 16 hands upon the head of the ram. And thou shalt slay the ram,
 and thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle [it] round about
 17 upon the altar. And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and
 wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put [them] unto
 18 his pieces, and unto his head. And thou shalt burn the whole
 ram upon the altar : it [is] a burnt offering unto the LORD :
 it [is] a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
 19 And thou shalt take the other ram for a peace offering, *both by way of thankfulness for calling him to his office, and to beg of God to prosper him in the execution of it* ; and Aaron and
 his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.
 20 Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put
 [it] upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of
 the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right
 hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle
 21 the blood upon the altar round about. And they shall take of
 the blood that [is] upon the altar, and of the anointing oil,
 and sprinkle [it] upon Aaron and upon his garments, and
 upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him :
 and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and
 22 his sons' garments with him. Also thou shalt take of the ram
 the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,

* A membrane or skin, which separates the heart and lungs from the lower intestines,

- and the caul [above] the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] upon them, and the right shoulder ; for it [is] a
- 23 ram of consecration, *of the priest in his office* : And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened bread that [is] before the LORD :
- 24 And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons ; and shalt wave them [for] a wave offering before
- 25 the LORD. And thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn [them] upon the altar for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour before the LORD : it [is] an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
- 26 And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave it [for] a wave offering before the LORD : and it shall be thy part. *That which was afterward given to the priests (v. 28. Lev. vii. 34,) is here assigned to Moses,*
- 27 *because he now executed the priest's office.* And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering, and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up of the ram of the consecration, [even] of [that] which [is] for Aaron, and of [that] which is for his sons : *this was done by throwing the parts up, and catching them again, to denote, their giving these things to God, and then receiving them again from*
- 28 *him as their portion* : And it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever from the children of Israel : for it [is] an heave offering : and it shall be an heave offering from the children of Israel of the sacrifice of their peace offering,
- 29 [even] their heave offering unto the LORD. And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons after him, to be anointed
- 30 therein, and to be consecrated in them. [And] that son that is priest in his stead shall put them on seven days, when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy [place.]
- 31 And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seethe
- 32 his flesh in the holy place. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that [is] in the basket, [by] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 33 And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate [and] to sanctify them : but a stranger
- 34 shall not eat [thereof] because they [are] holy. And if aught of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire :
- 35 it shall not be eaten, because it [is] holy. And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all [things] which I have commanded thee : seven days shalt thou consecrate them. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock [for] a sin offering for atonement : and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt
- 37 anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an

atonement for the altar, and sanctify it ; and it shall be an altar most holy : whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.

- 38 Now this [is that] which thou shalt offer upon the altar ;
 39 two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning ; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, *about three o'clock in the afternoon :*
 40 And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil ; and the fourth part
 41 of an hin of wine [for] a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire
 42 unto the LORD. [This shall be] a continual burnt offering throughout your generations [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD : where I will meet you, and to speak there unto thee.
 43 And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and [the
 44 tabernacle] shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar : I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me
 45 in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God, *by special covenant, and the manifold evidences of my favour toward them above all others.*
 46 And they shall know that I [am] the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them : I [am] the LORD their God.
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CHAP. XXX.

Contains an account of the altar of incense ; the ransom of souls ; the holy anointing oil ; and the composition of the perfume.

- 1 **A**ND thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon :
 2 [of] shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit [shall be] the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof ; four square shall it be : and two cubits [shall be] the height thereof : the horns thereof [shall be] of the same.
 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof ; and thou shalt make unto it a crown or rim of gold round about, *which served to keep the coals and incense from falling off.*
 4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make [it ;] and they shall be for places for the
 5 staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves
 6 [of] shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou

shall put it before the veil that [is] by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that [is] over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

- 7 And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning : when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it : *he was to do this the first time, but afterward any priest might do it.*
- 8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD
- 9 throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering ; neither
- 10 shall ye pour drink offering thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year, *on the day of reconciliation, (Lev. xvi. 18, 29, 30, Numb. xxix. 7 :)* with the blood of the sin offering of atonements : once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations : it [is] most holy unto the LORD.
- 11 12 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them, *a certain price for the redemption of their lives ; whereby they acknowledged God's right over their lives, that they had forfeited them by their sins, and that it was his mercy to continue them ;* that there be no plague
- 13 among them, when [thou] numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary, *about fourteen pence :* (a shekel [is] twenty gerahs :) an half shekel
- 14 [shall be] the offering of the LORD. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and
- 15 above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when [they] give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls : *to denote that all are redeemed by the same price, and that there is no respect of persons with*
- 16 *God.* And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, *for the building and furniture of it, and for maintaining God's worship there ;* that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.
- 17 18 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver [of] brass, and his foot [also of] brass, to wash [withal :] and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water
- 19 therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat : When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not ; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offer-

- 21 ing made by fire unto the LORD : So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not : and it shall be a statute for ever to them, [even] to him and to his seed throughout their generations.
- 22 23 Moreover, the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred [shekels,] and of sweet cinnamon half so much, [even] two hundred and fifty [shekels,] and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty [shekels,] And of cassia five hundred [shekels,] after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin, *about*
- 24 *three quarts* : And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary : it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony, And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick
- 25 and his vessels, and the altar of incense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot.
- 26 And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy : whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, and consecrate them, that [they]
- 27 may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations.
- 28 Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make [any other] like it, after the composition of it : it [is] holy,
- 29 [and] it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth [any] like it, or whosoever putteth [any] of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.
- 30 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum ; [these] sweet spices with pure frankincense : of each there shall be a like [weight :]
- 31 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure [and] holy : And thou shalt beat [some] of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where
- 32 I will meet with thee : it shall be unto you most holy. And [as for] the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof : it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

CHAP. XXXI.

We have here an account of Bezaleel and Aholiab being called for the work of the tabernacle ; of the sabbath ; and of Moses' receiving the two tables.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have
 2 called by name, Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of
 3 Hur, of the tribe of Judah : And I have filled him with the
 spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowl-
 4 edge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning
 5 works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in
 cutting of stones, to set [them,] and in carving of timber to
 6 work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have
 given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe
 of Dan : and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have
 put wisdom, *endued them with peculiar ability for this work,*
 7 that they may make all that I have commanded thee ; The tab-
 ernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony,
 and the mercy seat that [is] thereupon, and all the furniture
 8 of the tabernacle, And the table and his furniture, and the
 pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar of in-
 9 cense, And the altar of burnt offering with all his furniture,
 10 and the laver and his foot, And the cloths of service, and the
 holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his
 11 sons, to minister in the priest's office, And the anointing oil,
 and sweet incense of the holy [place :] according to all that I
 have commanded thee shall they do.
 12 13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou
 also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths
 ye shall keep ; *though the work of the tabernacle be holy, and*
be diligently and speedily to be done, yet I will not have any
of it done on the sabbath days : for it [is] a sign between me
 and you throughout your generations, *that you own me for*
your God, who am the Creator of heaven and earth, who re-
deemed you out of Egypt, and that I own you for my people ;
 that [ye] may know that I [am] the LORD that doth sanctify
 14 you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore ; for it [is] holy
 unto you : every one that defileth it shall surely be put to
 death : for whosoever doeth [any] work therein, that soul
 15 shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be
 done ; but in the seventh [is] the sabbath of rest, holy to the
 LORD : whosoever doeth [any] work in the sabbath day, he
 16 shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Is-
 rael shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath through-
 17 out their generations, [for] a perpetual covenant. It [is] a
 sign between me and the children of Israel for ever : for [is]

six days the Lord made heaven and earth; and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

- 10 And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, when forty days were expired, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God, his immediate work, to denote, that it was the work of God alone to write this law upon men's hearts.

CHAP. XXXII. 1—20.

We now proceed with the historical part of this book, and have here a very memorable and surprising story, the making of the golden calf, and its awful consequences.

- 1 **A**ND when the generality of the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, where he was forty days, receiving the law, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, in a tumultuous manner, and said unto him; Up, make us gods, an image or representation of God, as a visible sign of his presence among us, which shall go before us, as in other nations; for [as for] this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him; we expected to receive directions about God's service at this mountain, but we are weary of waiting, and therefore will serve God in our own way.* And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings which you brought from Egypt, and which [are] in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring [them] unto me.†
- 3 And all the people brake off the golden earrings which [were] in their ears, and brought [them] unto Aaron.
- 4 And he received [them] at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf:‡ and they said, These [be] thy gods, or, this is thy God, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,
- 5 or, this is a representation of him. And when Aaron saw with what applause they received [it,] and with what resolutions they crowded about it, he was concerned a little to faultate what he had done, and direct their views still to Jehovah, and he built an altar before it; and Aaron made

* Strange infatuation! after all they had seen, and notwithstanding all that was still before their eyes on the mount.

† When he saw no dissensions would prevail, probably he proposed this, conceiving they would never yield to it; but superstition and idolatry got the better of their consciences.

‡ He melted them down into the shape of a calf or an ox; under which likeness the Egyptians worshipped their god Apis, whom probably the Israelites followed. See Acts vii. 43.

- proclamation, and said, Tomorrow [is] a feast to the Lord.
- 6 And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; *thus, as the Psalmist observes, they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image: and the people sat down to eat and to drink, to feast upon the sacrifice, and rose up to play, to dance and rejoice in a carnal manner.**
- 7 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted [themselves;] *defiled themselves by idolatry, and so exposed themselves to judgment, (Gen. vi. 11—13.)*
- 8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them, *after entering into covenant with me, and promising obedience, (ch. xix. 8. xxiv. 7.)* they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and sacrificed thereunto, and said, These [be] thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it [is] a stiffnecked people, *stubborn and disobedient, like unruly heifers that, will*
- 10 *not submit their necks to the yoke: Now therefore let me alone, do not thou intercede for them, for I know not how to resolve upon their destruction, if thou be intercessor; (infinite condemnation!) let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. Thus, in the midst of judgment, there*
- 11 *was an intimation of mercy.* And Moses immediately took the hint, and besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? *Here he pleaded what God had done for them, and then urges what the Egyptians would say, and*
- 12 *how God's name would be reflected upon.* Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. *He then pleads the*
- 13 *promises made to their fathers, and God's holy covenant.* Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they
- 14 shall inherit [it] for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people; *he resolved not*

* It does not appear that they thought this calf was a real god: but their idolatry consisted in making an image or representation of the true God; and this, by this way, is a sufficient and unanswerable reason why the people are chargeable with idolatry; what would vindicate them, would vindicate the Israelites. 1 Cor. x. 7.

† God declines to call them his people any more. Isa. lix. 1, 2, and entitles Moses to show, that he might be the more solicitous to reduce them again into the right way.

to destroy them utterly, but only to furnish them for this great sin.

- 15 And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, *which was burning*, and the two tables of the testimony [were] in his hand : the tables [were] written on both their sides ; on the one side and on the other [were] they written; *that is, on the inside of each, on the right hand and on the left.* And the tables [were] the work of God, and the writing [was] the writing of God, graven upon the tables.* And when Joshua, *who waited for Moses at the bottom of the mount,* heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, 16 [There is] a noise of war in the camp. And he, *that is, Moses,* said, [It is] not the voice of [them that] shout for mastery, neither [is it] the voice of [them that] cry for being overcome : [but] the noise of [them that] sing do I hear.† 17 And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing : and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and 18 brake them beneath the mount.‡ And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt [it] in the fire, *melted it down,* and ground [it,] or *filed it,* to powder, and *having mixed some other ingredients with it to make it swim,* he strawed [it] upon the water of the brook *which came from the mountain,* and made the children of Israel drink [of it,] *to show them the vanity of such gods.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E may here observe the treachery of the human heart, and the unsteadiness of men's resolutions. When we read such a story as this, we may justly say, with surprise, *Lord, what is man !* what a poor, feeble, unsteady creature ! It was but a few weeks before, that they received the law, heard the voice of God, saying, *Thou shalt make no graven images ;* and they solemnly promised, *All that the Lord hath commanded will we do, and be obedient.* They entered into a covenant with blood ; they were supported, that very day, with manna ; they saw the pillar of cloud and fire ; and yet they fell into idolatry. ' If they had said, Choose us another governor,' (as Bp. HALL observes) it would have been a wicked, unthankful motion, and would have showed no respect to Moses' memory ; but to say, *Make us gods,* was foolish and impious. How many gods would they have had ! What sort of gods must those be, that could be made ? A

* No doubt a most curious production, as being the immediate work of God.

† He knew the true reason, but for a while concealed it, and said, *It is a voice of them that sing.* This was usual among the heathen, at festivals in honour of their deities.

‡ Moses might justly be angry, but it is probable, that the breaking of the tables was done with deliberation and design, to show that the covenant between them and God was broken by their idolatry.

god to go before them, that could not stand alone ! In such a stupid and senseless manner do men reason and talk, when they leave the worship of Jehovah. It was strange that Aaron should comply with their request ; that he, who could stand before Pharaoh, and defy his threats, should so easily be drawn in. He should have resisted, strove, and prayed, yea, died, rather than have yielded. Who can promise himself freedom from sin and infirmity, when he sees Aaron, the saint of the Lord, so tamely yield to a wicked solicitation ? Let us learn to *cease from man ; to cease from ourselves*, and not be confident in our own resolutions ; *let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

2. See the danger of partaking in other men's sins, and of a temper easily persuaded to do things contrary to the dictates of conscience : this was the case with Aaron. Let no importunity prevail upon us to forfeit our innocence, or to join in wickedness. *The fear of man* is often a snare to good men, and perhaps it was the case here ; it often leads men to do that, which would otherwise have appeared detestable. Let us therefore resist every temptation, keep ourselves pure, be no ways accessory to the guilt of others, through complaisance, timorousness, or any other cause. It will give but little ease, under present or future torments, to reflect that we have sinned to oblige others, or even for fear of suffering ourselves.

3. We may hence learn the efficacy of prayer : it cannot be more effectually expressed, and intimated, than here. Moses earnestly prayed ; God, knowing that he would do so, says, *v. 10. Let me alone ;* but he was determined not to keep silence, nor give God any rest ; and God suffered himself to be prevailed upon. See how proper it is to make intercession for all men ; what signal services we may do them ; of what advantage it may be, *to stand in the breach*, as Moses did, for a sinful land. This is an encouragement to *pray always, and not to faint.* *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Let us rejoice in the intercession which Christ continually makes for us ; *he is the mediator of a better covenant, and him the Father heareth always.*

CHAP. XXXII. 21, to the end.

The story of the golden calf continued.

- 21 **A**ND Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, *what great violence did they use*, that thou hast brought so great sin upon them ? *this great offence against the God of Israel ?*
- 22 And Aaron made a poor excuse, and said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot : thou knowest the people, that they

- [are set] on mischief ; *they are an obstinate untractable people, and there is no reclaiming them.* For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us : for [as for] this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him ; *they insisted on my doing*
- 24 *it, and spoke very disrespectfully of thee.* And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break [it] off : *I thought to make it very expensive to them, in hopes that they would not comply. But so it was that they gave [it] me : then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.**
- 25 And when Moses saw that the people [were] naked, unarmed, intent upon their diversion, set at liberty from all restraint ; (for Aaron had made them naked unto [their] shame among their enemies, by appointing them to keep such a feast.) Thus they were at once deprived of their innocence, and of the favour and protection of God, and so might easily be surprised
- 26 by their enemies. Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and there set up his standard in opposition to the golden calf, and said, Who [is] on the Lord's side ? *who will take God's part against idolatry and idolaters ?* [let him come] unto me. And all the sons of Levi, *that is, the greatest part of them,*
- 27 gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, *fill your hand with your sword, as the original is, and execute the divine commission with impartiality and holy zeal for God,* [and] go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour ; *slay the ringleaders, though they be your nearest relations. (Deut.*
- 28 *xxxiii. 9.)* And the children of Levi who came to Moses did according to the word of Moses : *accordingly the judgment was executed,* and there fell of the people that day about three
- 29 thousand men, *in the midst of idolatry and mirth.* For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother ; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.
- 30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin : and now I will go up unto the Lord again, to pray, and plead for you ; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. *He speaks doubtfully,*
- 31 *to rouse their fears and awaken their repentance.* And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, *with great concern and horror, quite overwhelmed with grief and shame,* Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.
- 32 Yet now, if thou wilt, I pray thee, forgive their sin ; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast

* A strange, conscious story. If Aaron meant by this, that others made it, it was not true, nor much to the purpose ; for as a magistrate, he ought to have prevented it, and not encouraged them in it.

written ; if thou art determined to destroy Israel, let me die with them, blot my name out of thy book with theirs ; for I cannot bear to survive them. This was a noble and heroic disposition.

- 33 And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book ; *I will punish none but the transgressors : I will spare the righteous, the innocent, and the penitent.* Therefore now go, lead the people unto [the place] of which I have spoken unto thee : behold, mine Angel shall go before thee, *as I promised, ch. xxiii. 20. notwithstanding this their rebellion against me : nevertheless, in the day when I visit and punish them for other crimes, I will visit this their sin upon them, and they shall suffer more severely on account of it.* And the LORD plagued the people with pestilence, or some other awful judgment, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **H**OW mean does guilt make a man appear, though otherwise he may be wise and good ! What a poor figure does Aaron make ! It was a sorry excuse that he offered ; better he had said nothing ; indeed he could scarce say any thing, even to palliate the crime. Let us avoid sin, and every appearance of evil ; this will give us courage and joy. The greatest enmity which can be done to persons, is to lead them to sin, as Aaron did.

2. We may learn from the conduct of the Levites, to act impartially, when engaged in the cause of God. Moses speaks of it to their praise, in his final blessing, that *they did not know their brethren*, nor acknowledge their children, when they were commanded to execute divine vengeance. They did not make this a scene of private affection and partiality. Thus must we act in God's cause ; do nothing from partiality ; be ready, as they were, to appear on the Lord's side ; and not be neuter, when the cause of truth and righteousness demands our regard. Let us espouse the Lord's interest against all who oppose it, be they ever so numerous ; join on the Lord's side, though, as here, there may be very few that do so. Let us act an upright, honest part ; consecrate ourselves to the service of God ; then, whatever men say, and however they treat us, he will bestow a blessing upon us, as he did upon Levi. If we consecrate ourselves to God's service, he will consecrate us to special dignity ; and make us kings and priests unto himself. His side will be victorious, and he will bountifully reward all those who espouse it.

* Most of the ancient versions render it, *because they received the calf which Aaron made ;* and this is probably the genuine meaning of the passage.

3. We must not conclude that guilt is forgiven, because the punishment of it is delayed, *v. 34. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.* I shall be more ready to punish future transgressions, for it will be a great aggravation of their guilt, if, in any future instance, they offend against me. This is a necessary caution ; for men are ready to think God forgets, because they do ; and *because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* They think it will never be remembered, and they shall never be called to an account ; but this is a dangerous mistake ; Israel knew it to be so to their cost. They were so sensible of the malignity of this crime, that it was a common saying among them, in after ages, ‘ There was no judgment came upon them, but was mixed with an ounce of the golden calf.’ The modern Jews keep a yearly fast on that day, to entreat the divine favour. In a word, the great lesson to be learnt from the whole is, that we should *watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation*, for God is jealous of his honour, of his name, of the purity of his worship, and the observance of his commands : *none ever hardened themselves against him and prospered.*

CHAP. XXXIII.

The divine displeasure being still manifested against Israel, Moses successfully intercedes for them, and for himself.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, [and] go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will
- 2 I give it : And I will send an angel before thee ; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the
- 3 Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite : Unto a land flowing with milk and honey : for, *though I will send my angel, as I promised, ch. xxiii. yet I will not go up in the midst of thee, in favour, and with a visible sign of my presence, (yet afterward he was entreated, v. 14.) for thou [art] a stiffnecked people : lest I consume thee in the way, if thou shouldst trespass again so abominably as in the matter of the golden calf : so that in the midst of judgment God remembered mercy.*
- 4 And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned : and no man did put on him his ornaments, *but used signs*
- 5 *of mourning and lamentation.* For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye [are] a stiffnecked people ; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee, *if thou repent not : therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, humble thyself, and show fruits of*

- repentance, that I may know what to do unto thee, whether thou wilt repent, or persist in thy sin, and so do accordingly.*
- 6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.
- 7 And Moses took the tabernacle, *(probably the tent in which he inquired of God, and sat in judgment)* and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation, or meeting, *because here God met Moses, and here the people came to seek direction in difficult cases.* And it came to pass, [that] every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which [was] without the camp ; *which, though it was a mark of God's displeasure, yet gave them hope that he would be found of them that sought him, though he did not dwell in the midst of them.*
- 8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, *to intercede with God for the people,* [that] all the people rose up, and stood every man [at] his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle, *acknowledging themselves unworthy to approach nearer.*
- 9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood [at] the door of the tabernacle, and [the LORD] talked with Moses *out of the cloudy pillar, which was a sign of favour, (Psa. xcix. 7.)* And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand [at] the tabernacle door : and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man [in] his tent door, *adoring the divine majesty, and adding their earnest intercessions to those of Moses.* And the LORD spake unto Moses, *out of the shining cloud,* face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, *audibly, distinctly, with great kindness and condescension : which showed his approbation of Moses.* And he turned again into the camp ; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle, *but waited there before the Lord.*
- 12 And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people : and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me, *who this angel is that I am to expect ; and thou hast withdrawn thy special presence.* Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight, *I have a special and particular regard for thee.* Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, *what course thou meanest to take with us,* that I may know thee, *how good thou art,* that I may find grace in thy sight : and consider that this nation [is] thy people, *thine by covenant, and under thy special care.* And he, *that is, God, graciously heard and answered him, and said,* My presence shall go [with thee,] and I will give thee rest, *from thy present perplexity, and will in due time bring thy people to*

- 15 *their resting place.** And he said unto him, If thy presence go not [with me,] *if thou dost not grant us this favour,* carry us not up hence, *here let us remain.* For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight ? [Is it] not in that thou goest with us ? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that [are] upon the face of the earth ; *we shall be distinguished by thy peculiar kindness, and the privileges vouchsafed to us.* And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken : for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name, *know thee above all men ; thou art my particular favourite and friend.*
- 16 And he said, *If it be so, and I have found such favour in thy sight,* I beseech thee, show me thy glory.† And he said, I will make all my goodness, *which is my peculiar glory,* to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee ; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy : *I will manifest my sovereign love and mercy to these people, notwithstanding their provocations and idolatry.* And he said, Thou canst not see my face, *the majesty and glory attending that external shape I have now assumed :* for there shall no man see me, and live.
- 17 And the LORD said, Behold, [there is] a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock : And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, *which will limit thy view of my glory ;* and I will cover thee with my hand while I pass by, *that thou mayest not be overwhelmed by it.* And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, *as much as thou canst bear :* but my face shall not be seen.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **T**HE deepest humility becomes us, when we have lost the sense of God's presence, and the hopes of his favour ; when we have fallen into sin, and are grown careless and negligent ; this is a time for lamentation ; it becomes us to bewail this deeply, and to repent most heartily, for woe unto us, if God depart from us.

2. We learn hence, that God maintains a certain decorum in dealing with his creatures, which he will not, and, as a wise and holy being, he cannot violate ; v. 3. *I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiffnecked people ; lest I consume thee in the way.* He is obliged to animadvert on the transgressions of his people, and not pardon sin by a mere arbitrary act, but in a manner that

* This is a revocation of the sentence, v. 3.

† Perhaps there was some glorious appearance within the cloud, that Moses wished to see, still farther to increase his veneration, devotion, and love.

shall express his displeasure, and through Moses the mediator. Thus he removed his tabernacle, and the like. The atonement of Christ stands on the same foundation as this : the same view is carried on, through all the divine dispensations. God does things in such an honourable way, as may give his creatures the highest opinion of his purity and holiness, that they may not think light of sin, or of pardoning mercy.

3. It is desirable, wherever we go, to carry along with us the tokens of the divine presence, especially when entering on new settlements in life : our language should be that of Moses, *v. 15. If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence.* The wilderness was an uncomfortable situation ; and to have stayed there would have been very unpleasant ; yet he had rather stay there, with God's presence, than remove without it. God does not manifest himself so now ; but still he has ways of manifesting himself to his church and people. There is a special presence of God with good men ; and that may be known, as his presence formerly was, by its signs and operations, in preparing and assisting men to holy actions, conforming them to holy habits, and affording them strong consolations. It is, in one word, a lively sense of religion upon the soul, promoted and maintained by the Spirit of God. Let us earnestly seek this ; take pains to secure it, by attending on religious ordinances, praying for the Spirit, and the like. Let us begin every day, and every action, with these words of Moses, *Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us ; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*

4. The more we know of God the greater will be our desire to know more of him : so Moses says, *v. 18. I beseech thee, show me thy glory.* We shall see such excellencies and beauties in him, and find such comfort and advantage to ourselves, that our desires will be fervent to know more of God, and feel more of his love. Let us labour after this, for *then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.*

5. The goodness of God is the most illustrious part of the glory of the divine majesty : it renders all his other attributes amiable, lovely, and desirable. Let us consider it in this view, as a foundation of hope, as a ground of admiration and cheerful confidence. We are taught what is the glory of his rational creatures ; to be good, and to do good. Benevolence renders us like God ; generosity, kindness, and charity, are the greatest glory of a moral agent, better than wealth, honour, or any other accomplishment. Let us then *be merciful, as our Father in heaven is merciful.*

6. When we have the brightest discoveries of God's presence and glory here below, let us long for those more perfect views of it, which are to be expected when mortality shall be laid aside, *x. 20. Thou canst not see my face ; for there shall no man see me,*

and live. We cannot rest satisfied with what we see and taste here below ; we should indeed be thankful for it, but be desirous of something better. God could easily overpower us with his glory ; but we are earthen vessels, and he proportions his communications to our capacities. But when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, the people of God shall be so strengthened, as to take in the brightest beams of his presence ; and that, which would now overwhelm them, shall be an immortal source of life and vigour. We shall see Christ, not through the cloud, as Moses did, but as he is. *With God is the fountain of life ; in his light we shall see eternal light.* Let us long for that glorious day ; and so improve our present discoveries, that we may be made meet for an inheritance among the saints in light, to behold God's face in righteousness, and to be satisfied with his likeness.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Contains further proof of God's kindness to Israel. Moses returns to the mount ; beholds the glory of God ; intercedes for the people ; the covenant is renewed ; directions are given about the nature and manner of worship ; and Moses returns to the people with a splendid countenance.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first : *(God did this before, but now Moses is commanded to do it :)* and I will write upon [these] tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou
- 2 brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in
- 3 the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount ; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount,
- 4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first ; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.
- 5 And the LORD descended in the cloud ; *that is, the cloud which stood over the mountain came down and covered it,* and Moses entered into it ; and the LORD stood with him there,
- 6 and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed *his name with an audible, distinct voice,* The LORD, The LORD God, *the self-existent almighty Jehovah,* merciful in pitying his people's afflictions and miseries, and gracious in showing favour to the unworthy, long-suffering, bearing long with their provocations, and abundant in goodness and truth, whose bounty is large, extensive, and

- constant, and so is his truth and fidelity to all his promises ;*
- 7 Keeping mercy for thousands of generations, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, *all kinds and degrees of sin,* and that will by no means clear [the guilty,] *but awfully and severely punish them ;* visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth [generation ;] *particularly the sin of idolatry, as forbidden in the second commandment, the fatal effects of which will extend to their children, if they continue to walk in their father's steps.*
- 8 And Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth and worshipped ; *being greatly affected, he prostrated himself before God, with humble reverence and holy joy ; and seized this happy, favourable moment, to intercede for this sinful people.* And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O LORD, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us ; for it [is] a stiffnecked people, *and need thine awful presence to rule them ; or, though they be a stiffnecked people, yet show them compassion ;* and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.
- 10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant : before all thy people I will do marvels, *terrible things in thy sight, and especially in the sight of thine enemies,* such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation : and all the people among which thou [art] shall see the work of the LORD ; for it [is] a terrible thing that I will do with thee,
- 11 *that is, by thy hand.* Observe thou that which I command thee this day : behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the
- 12 Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither
- 13 thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee : But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves, *where they worship their images, which were often impure and polluted places :* For thou shalt worship no other god : for the LORD, whose name [is] Jealous, [is] a
- 15 jealous God, *and will endure no rival or competitor :* Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, *forsake the Lord, and cleave unto idols,* and do sacrifice unto their gods, and [one] call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice ; *and so partake with him in idolatrous worship, because such feasts were a part of the worship offered to the idol ; (1 Cor. x. 20.)* And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, *in marriage,* and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a
- 17 whoring after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods, *nor any other kind of idol,*

- 18 The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib : for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt. All that openeth the matrix [is] mine, *that is, every firstborn* ; and every firstling among thy cattle, [whether] ox or sheep, [that is male.]
- 20 But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb : and if thou redeem [him] not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty. *See chap. xxij. 15.*
- 21 Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest : in earing time and in harvest, *in the most busy times of the year*, thou shalt rest ; *nothing shall excuse you from this.*
- 22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end, *that is, the feast of Pentecost and Tabernacles.*
- 23 Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel. *And at that time fear*
- 24 *none of thine enemies*, For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders : neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year.*
- 25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven ; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left
- 26 unto the morning. The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk. *See chap. xxiii. 19. Deut. xiv. 21.*
- 27 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words *in the book of the law* : for after the tenor of these words I
- 28 have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights, (*beside those, chap. xxiv. 18.*) he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he, *that is, God*, wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.
- 29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.†
- 30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone ; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them ; and Aaron

* This was exactly fulfilled ; it was a remarkable circumstance, and a glorious attestation of the truth of the Mosaic religion.

† This was an evident token of his conversing with God ; he had seen a brighter glory than before, and his face still reflected some of the rays of the shekinah which had fallen upon him. This was designed to do honour to Moses, and secure a greater regard to the law, which was now renewed.

- and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him :
 32 and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh : and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in mount Sinai.
 33 And [till] Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil
 34 on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel [that]
 35 which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses; that the skin of Moses' face shone : and Moses put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us remember and meditate upon this awful, this delightful name of God ; consider it at large ; he is pitiful, compassionate as a father, kind and generous, universally benevolent, *abundant in goodness and truth*. How proper an object for our love, and trust, and confidence ! Let us *fear the Lord and his goodness* ; and endeavour in all things to be like him, to *be perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect*.

2. Those who are favoured with views of the divine glory, should improve those precious moments : so Moses fell down, and interceded for Israel. When we have clear and raised conceptions of God, when we find his attributes possessing and influencing our minds, and taste and see that he is good ; then let us exercise humility, joy, and trust, and plead for mercy for ourselves and others. The more we see of God's goodness, the more humble, serious, and devout it should make us ; and the more solicitous to express our good wishes for all our fellow creatures.

3. Let us attend to the demands of God's covenant, if we desire to enjoy the blessings of it. *Behold, I make a covenant ; Observe thou that which I command thee*. We should always remember what God requires of us ; how reasonable his demands are, and cheerfully comply with them. To expect the blessing without such a compliance, is affronting to God, and deceiving ourselves.

4. Let us reflect on the obscurity of the Mosaic dispensation, as intimated by the veil on Moses' face. See 2 Cor. iii. 13, &c. where Paul so explains this by way of allusion. The Jews did not then understand the spiritual meaning and design of the law ; and there is still a *veil on their hearts* ; but when they are converted it shall be taken away. *But we all, with unveiled faces, behold, by reflection, the glory of the Lord, and are changed into his image, by the Spirit of the Lord*. The veil is now taken away ; *life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel*. Let us be

thankful that we are not under the law, but under grace ; and rightly employ and improve our religious privileges.

5. Let us be careful that, in a spiritual sense, our faces shine by converse with God. *Wisdom*, says Solomon, *makes a man's face to shine*, gives him an amiable, engaging lustre ; it commands esteem and regard. We should show to the world that we have communion with God, by the lustre of our piety and holiness. Converse with him should quicken us to a temper and conduct ornamental to religion. *Let your light then so shine before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

CHAP. XXXV.

From this chapter to the tenth of Leviticus, contains an account of erecting the tabernacle, and consecrating Aaron and his sons to the priesthood. Little is said upon these things, for the reasons given at the beginning of the twenty fifth chapter.

- 1 **A**ND Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These [are] the words which the LORD hath commanded, that [ye] should
- 2 do them. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD : whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.
- 3 Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day, *either to dress food, or for any worldly employment.*
- 4 And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This [is] the thing which the LORD com-
- 5 manded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD : whosoever [is] of a willing heart, let him bring
- 6 it, an offering of the LORD ; gold, and silver, and brass, And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' [hair,]
- 7 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim
- 8 wood, And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and
- 9 for the sweet incense, And onyx stones, and stones to be set
- 10 for the ephod, and for the breastplate. And every wise heart-
- 11 ed among you, shall come and make all that the LORD hath
- 12 commanded ; The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his
- 13 taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets,
- 14 The ark and the staves thereof, [with] the mercy seat, and
- 15 the veil of the covering, The table, and his staves, and all his
- 16 vessels, and the shew bread, The candlestick also for the light,
- 17 and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light, And the incense altar, and his staves, and anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the door at the entering

16 in of the tabernacle, The altar of burnt offering, with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his
 17 foot, The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets,
 18 and the hanging for the door of the court, The pins of the
 19 tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords, The cloths of service, to do service in the holy [place,] the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office.

20 And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed
 21 from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, *whose judgment and understanding in such kind of work inclined him to a willingness to undertake it,* [and] they brought the LORD's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, [and] brought bracelets, and earrings and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold : and every man that offered [offered] an offering of gold unto the LORD, *contributing these things now as willingly for the service of the tabernacle, as before toward making the golden calf.* And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' [hair,] and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought [them.] Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass brought the LORD's offering : and every man, with whom was found shittim wood for any work of the
 25 service, brought [it.] And all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, [both] of blue, and of purple, [and] of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them
 26 up in wisdom spun goats' [hair.] And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the
 28 breastplate ; And spice, and oil for the light, and for the
 29 anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which the LORD had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.

30 And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur,
 31 of the tribe of Judah ; And he hath filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in
 32 all manner of workmanship ; And to devise curious works,
 33 to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in the cutting of stones, to set [them,] and in carving of wood, to make any
 34 manner of cunning work. And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, [both] he, and Aboliab, the son of Ahisamach,
 35 of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of

heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, [even] of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Contains an account of the offerings being delivered to the workmen, and the liberality of the people restrained.

- 1 **T**HEN wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had
- 2 commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, [even] every one whose heart stirred him up to
- 3 come unto the work to do it : And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it [withal.] And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning.
- 4 And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made ;
- 5 And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the
- 6 LORD commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were
- 7 restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.
- 8 And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle made ten curtains [of] fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet : [with] cher-
- 9 ubims of cunning work made he them. The length of one curtain [was] twenty and eight cubits, *seventeen yards and two inches*, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits : the
- 10 curtains [were] all of one size. And he coupled the five curtains one unto another : and [the other] five curtains he
- 11 coupled one unto another. And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain from the selvage in the coupling : likewise he made in the uttermost side of [another] cur-
- 12 tain, in the coupling of the second. Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which [was] in the coupling of the second : the loops held

13 one [curtain] to another. And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches : so it became one tabernacle.

14 And he made curtains [of] goats' [hair] for the tent over
15 the tabernacle : eleven curtains he made them. The length of one curtain [was] thirty cubits, *eighteen yards and a quarter*, and four cubits [was] the breadth of one curtain : the eleven
16 curtains [were] of one size. And he coupled five curtains
17 by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. And he made fifty loops upon the uttermost edge of the curtain in the coupling, and fifty loops made he upon the edge of the
18 curtain which coupleth the second. And he made fifty taches [of] brass to couple the tent together, that it might be one.
19 And he made a covering for the tent [of] rams' skins dyed red, and a covering [of] badgers' skins above [that.]

20 And he made boards for the tabernacle [of] shittim wood,
21 standing up *on their ends*. The length of a board [was] ten
22 cubits, and the breadth of a board one cubit and a half. One board had two tenons, equally distant one from another :
23 thus did he make for all the boards of the tabernacle. And he made boards for the tabernacle ; twenty boards for the
24 south side, southward : And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards ; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his
25 two tenons. And for the other side of the tabernacle, [which is] toward the north corner, he made twenty boards,
26 And their forty sockets of silver ; two sockets under one
27 board, and two sockets under another board. And for the sides of the tabernacle westward he made six boards.
28 And two boards made he for the corners of the tabernacle in
29 the two sides. And they were coupled beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one ring : thus he did to
30 both of them in both the corners. And there were eight boards ; and their sockets [were] sixteen sockets of silver, under every board two sockets.

31 And he made bars of shittim wood ; five for the boards of
32 the one side of the tabernacle, And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the
33 boards of the tabernacle for the sides westward. And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the
34 one end to the other. And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings [of] gold [to be] places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

35 And he made a veil *for the most holy place*, [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen : [with] cheru-
36 bims made he it of cunning work. And he made thereunto four pillars [of] shittim [wood,] and overlaid them with

gold : their hooks [were of] gold ; and he cast for them four sockets of silver.

- 37 And he made an hanging for the tabernacle door, *which divided the holy place from the court*, [of] blue, and purple, 38 and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of needle work ; And the five pillars of it with their hooks : and he overlaid their chapiters and their fillets with gold : but their five sockets [were of] brass.
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CHAP. XXXVII.

Contains a description of the ark ; of the mercy seat and the cherubims ; the table ; the candlestick ; and the altar of incense.

- 1 **A**ND Bezaleel made the ark [of] shittim wood : two cubits and a half [was] the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it : And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, 2 and made a crown of gold to it round about. And he cast for it four rings of gold, [to be set] by the four corners of it ; even two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon 3 the other side of it. And he made staves [of] shittim wood, 4 and overlaid them with gold. And he put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, to bear the ark. 5 6 And he made the mercy seat [of] pure gold : two cubits and a half [was] the length thereof, and one cubit and a half 7 the breadth thereof. And he made two cherubims [of] gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two 8 ends of the mercy seat ; One cherub on the end on this side, and another cherub on the [other] end on that side : out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends 9 thereof. And the cherubims spread out [their] wings on high, [and] covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another ; [even] to the mercy seat ward were the faces of the cherubims. 10 And he made the table [of] shittim wood ; two cubits [was] the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, 11 and a cubit and a half the height thereof : And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round 12 about. Also he made thereunto a border of an hand breadth round about ; and made a crown of gold for the border there, 13 of round about. And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings upon the four corners that [were] in the four 14 feet thereof. Over against the border were the rings, the 15 places for the staves to bear the table. And he made the staves [of] shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold, to 16 bear the table. And he made the vessels which [were] upon

- the table, his dishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to cover withal, [of] pure gold.
- 17 And he made the candlestick [of] pure gold : of beaten work made he the candlestick : his shaft, and his branch, his
- 18 bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same : And six branches going out of the sides thereof ; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof :
- 19 Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower ; and three bowls made like almonds in another branch, a knop and a flower : so throughout the six
- 20 branches going out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick [were] four bows made like almonds, his knops, and his
- 21 flowers : And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches going out
- 22 of it. Their knops and their branches were of the same : all
- 23 of it [was] one beaten work [of] pure gold. And he made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff dishes, [of]
- 24 pure gold. [Of] a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof.
- 25 And he made the incense altar [of] shittim wood ; the length of it [was] a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit ; [it was] foursquare ; and two cubits [was] the height of it ; the
- 26 horns thereof were of the same. And he overlaid it with pure gold, [both] the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it : also he made unto it a crown of gold
- 27 round about. And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal.
- 28 And he made the staves [of] shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold.
- 29 And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary.
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CHAP. XXXVIII.

Contains an account of the altar of burnt offering ; the laver of brass ; the court ; and the sum of the offering.

- 1 **A**ND he made the altar of burnt offering [of] shittim wood : five cubits [was] the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof ; [it was] foursquare ; and three
- 2 cubits the height thereof. And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it ; the horns thereof were of the
- 3 same : and he overlaid it with brass. And he made all the

- vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basons, [and] the flesh hooks, and the fire pans : all the vessels
- 4 thereof made he [of] brass. And he made for the altar a brazen grate of net work under the compass thereof beneath
- 5 unto the midst of it. And he cast four rings for the four
- 6 ends of the grate of brass, [to be] places for the staves. And he made the staves [of] shittim wood, and overlaid them
- 7 with brass. And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it withal ; he made the altar hollow with boards.
- 8 And he made the laver [of] brass, and the foot of it [of] brass, of the looking glasses of [the women] (*which were all made of polished brass*) assembling, which assembled [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 9 And he made the court : on the south side southward the hangings of the court [were of] fine twined linen, an hundred cubits, *about sixty one yards* : Their pillars [were] twenty, and their brazen sockets twenty ; the hooks of the pillars
- 11 and their fillets [were of] silver. And for the north side [the hangings were] an hundred cubits, their pillars [were] twenty, and their sockets of brass twenty ; the hooks of the
- 12 pillars and their fillets [of] silver. And for the west side [were] hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten ; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets [of]
- 13 silver. And for the east side eastward fifty cubits. The
- 14 hangings of the one side [of the gate were] fifteen cubits ;
- 15 their pillars three, and their sockets three. And for the other side of the court gate, on this hand and that hand, [were] hangings of fifteen cubits ; their pillars three, and their sockets three. All the hangings of the court round about [were]
- 17 of fine twined linen. And the sockets for the pillars [were of] brass ; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets [of] silver ; and the overlaying of their chapters [of] silver ; and all the pillars of the court [were] filleted with silver.
- 18 And the hanging for the gate of the court [was] needle work, [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen : and twenty cubits [was] the length, and the height in the breadth [was] five cubits, answerable to the hangings of the
- 19 court. And their pillars [were] four, and their sockets [of] brass four ; their hooks [of] silver, and the overlaying of their chapters and their fillets [of] silver. And all the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, [were of] brass.
- 21 This is the sum of the tabernacle,* [even] of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, [for] the service of the Levites, by the

* The particulars of the tabernacle and the holy things belonging to it ; which were taken, as it were in an inventory, by Ithamar at the commandment of Moses, and delivered into the custody of the Levites, that nothing might be lost.

23 hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest. And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the Lord commanded Moses. And with him [was] Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and in fine linen. All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy [place,] even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.* And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation [was] an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary :† A bekah for every man, [that is,] half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty [men.] And of the hundred talents of silver, were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the veil ; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket. And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five [shekels] he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their chapters, and filleted them. And the brass of the offering [was] seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels.‡ And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar. And the sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the court gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.

CHAP. XXXIX.

Contains an account of the cloths of service ; the holy garments ; the ephod ; the breastplate ; and the robe of the ephod.

1 **A**ND of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy [place,] and made the holy garments for Aaron ; as the Lord commanded Moses.
2 And he made the ephod [of] gold, blue, and purple, and
3 scarlet, and fine twined linen. And they did beat the gold

* Which amounted to one hundred fifty nine thousand one hundred and seven pounds, five shillings of our money.

† That is, thirty four thousand four hundred twenty one pounds, four shillings, and two pence halfpenny.

‡ Which is in weight six thousand six hundred thirty seven pounds and a half, avoirdupois.

- into thin plates, and cut [it into] wires, to work [it] in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, [with] cunning work. They made shoulder pieces for it, to couple [it] together : by the two edges was it coupled together.
- And the curious girdle of his ephod, that [was] upon it, [was] of the same, according to the work thereof ; [of] gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And they wrought onyx stones enclosed in ouches of gold, graven, as signets are graven, with the names of the children of Israel. And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, [that they should be] stones for a memorial to the children of Israel ; as the LORD commanded Moses.
- And he made the breastplate [of] cunning work, like the work of the ephod ; [of] gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. It was foursquare ; they made the breastplate double : a span [was] the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, [being] doubled. And they set in it four rows of stones : [the first] row [was] a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle : this [was] the first row. And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper : [they were] enclosed in ouches of gold in their enclosings. And the stones [were] according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, [like] the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes. And they made upon the breastplate chains at the ends, [of] wreathen work [of] pure gold. And they made two ouches [of] gold, and two gold rings, and put the two rings in the two ends of the breastplate. And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breastplate. And the two ends of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, before it. And they made two rings of gold, and put [them] on the two ends of the breastplate, upon the border of it, which [was] on the side of the ephod inward.
- And they made two [other] golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the [other] coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod. And they did bind the breastplate by his rings unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that it might be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate might not be loosed from the ephod ; as the LORD commanded Moses.
- And he made the robe of the ephod [of] woven work, all [of] blue. And [there was] an hole in the midst of the robe,

as the hole of an habergeon, [with] a band round about the
 24 hole, that it should not rend. And they made upon the hems
 of the robe pomegranates [of] blue, and purple, and scarlet,
 25 [and] twined [linen.] And they made bells [of] pure gold,
 and put the bells between the pomegranates upon the hem of
 26 the robe, round about, between the pomegranates ; A bell and
 a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the
 hem of the robe to minister [in ;] as the Lord commanded
 Moses.

27 And they made coats [of] fine linen [of] woven work for
 28 Aaron and for his sons, And a mitre [of] fine linen, and good-
 ly bonnets [of] fine linen, and linen breeches [of] fine twined
 29 linen, And a girdle [of] fine twined linen, and blue, and pur-
 ple, and scarlet, [of] needle work ; as the Lord commanded
 Moses.

30 And they made the plate of the holy crown [of] pure gold,
 and wrote upon it a writing, [like to] the engravings of a sig-
 31 net, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And they tied unto it a
 lace of blue, to fasten [it] on high upon the mitre ; as the
 Lord commanded Moses.

32 This was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the
 congregation finished : and the children of Israel did accord-
 ing to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.
 33 And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent, and
 all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his pil-
 34 lars, and his sockets, And the covering of rams' skins dyed
 red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the veil of the
 35 covering, The ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof,
 36 and the mercy seat, The table, [and] all the vessels thereof,
 37 and the shew bread, The pure candlestick, [with] the lamps
 thereof, [even with] the lamps to be set in order, and all the
 38 vessels thereof, and the oil for light, And the golden altar,
 and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging
 39 for the tabernacle door, The brazen altar, and his grate of
 brass, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot,
 40 The hangings of the court, his pillars, and his sockets, and
 the hanging for the court gate, his cords, and his pins, and all
 the vessels of the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of the
 41 congregation, The cloths of service to do service in the holy
 [place,] and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his
 42 sons' garments, to minister in the priest's office. According
 to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of
 43 Israel made all the work. And Moses did look upon all the
 work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had com-
 manded, even so had they done it : and Moses blessed them :
as God's minister, he pronounced a blessing in his name, both on
the people, for their liberal contributions, and on the workmen,
for their care and industry.

CHAP. XL.

Contains an account of the tabernacle being commanded to be reared, and anointed, and Aaron and his sons to be sanctified.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, On the first
 2 day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle
 3 of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt put therein
 4 the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil, *hang*
 5 *the veil before the ark.* And thou shalt bring in the table, and
 6 set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it, *the*
 7 *shew bread*; and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light
 8 the lamps thereof. And thou shalt set the altar of gold for
 9 the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the
 10 hanging of the door to the tabernacle. And thou shalt set
 11 the altar of the burnt offering before the door of the taber-
 12 nacle of the tent of the congregation. And thou shalt set the
 13 laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and
 14 shalt put water therein. And thou shalt set up the court
 15 round about, and hang up the hanging at the court gate.
 16 And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tab-
 17 ernacle, and all that [is] therein, and shalt hallow it, and all
 18 the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. And thou shalt
 19 anoint the altar of the burnt offering, and all his vessels, and
 20 sanctify the altar; and it shall be an altar most holy. And
 thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.
 And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of
 the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with wa-
 ter. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and
 anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me
 in the priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and
 clothe them with coats: And thou shalt anoint them, as thou
 didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in
 the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an ev-
 erlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*
 Thus did Moses: according to all that the LORD command-
 ed him, so did he. And it came to pass in the first month
 in the second year, on the first [day] of the month, [that] the
 tabernacle was reared up. And Moses reared up the taber-
 nacle, and fastened his sockets, and set up the boards thereof,
 and put in the bars thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he
 spread abroad the tent over the tabernacle, *the curtains of goats'*
hair, and put the covering of the tent above upon it, *both that*
of ram's skins, and badger's skins; as the LORD commanded
 Moses. And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and
 set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon

* A sign or seal that their priesthood should continue as long as their polity should last: and this unction should be sufficient for all succeeding priests, that they should not need to be anointed again, except the high priest.

- 21 the ark : And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the veil of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle northward, without the veil. And he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD ; as the LORD had commanded Moses. And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward. And he lighted the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses. And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation, before the veil : And he burnt sweet incense thereon ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set up the hanging [at] the door of the tabernacle. And he put the altar of burnt offering [by] the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the meat offering ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash [withal.] And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat : When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.
- 34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation ; *that cloud mentioned in chap. xiii. 21, 22, miraculously removed hither, as a testimony of God's presence and approbation ; and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle, whereby God took possession of it, (see ch. xxv. 8. 1 Kings viii. 10, 12. Ezek. xliii. 4, 5, 7. and Rev. xxi. 11.)* And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys : But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD [was] upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.



The Third Book of *MOSES*,

CALLED,

LEVITICUS.

INTRODUCTION.

*THIS Book being chiefly employed in describing the sacrifices and services of the tabernacle, to be performed by AARON the Levite, as he is called, Exod. iv. 14. and by his sons, who alone had the office of priesthood, in the tribe of Levi, it is therefore termed, both by the Greek and Latin translators, LEVITICUS : and that part of the Jewish religion which is ceremonial, is fitly denominated the Levitical Law.**

CHAP. I.

Contains an account of the burnt offerings of the herd, of the flocks, and of the fowls.

1 **A**ND the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him
2 out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, [even] of the herd, and of the flock.

* These ceremonial services are reducible to the following heads :

1. Sacrifices of several kinds. These, though but external ordinances of positive institution, yet had a relation to spiritual worship, and pointed out several moral duties ; while the whole was a typical scheme, and a fit introduction to the more perfect dispensation of the Messiah, by whom both they and we were to receive our full atonement and acceptance with God.

2. Purifications from various kinds of legal uncleanness. Which, though they cannot be denied to have been a troublesome branch of the Jewish religion, and one of those circumstances which denominated it an elementary *piety*, and a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were *well* able to bear, they were not however intended to terminate in mere ritual observance, they were most apt significations of inward and substantial holiness ; such as reverence toward God, and purity of heart and life.

3. The solemn festivals. The observance whereof was so far from being a needless institution, that they appear to have been exceeding proper for preserving the whole nation in the practice of *truth*, and from the corruptions of *false* religion. They were thankful commemorations of signal national mercies, and by their constant attendance on these joyful solemnities, at so many stated times of the year, and at the one fixed place of national worship, they went through those courses of divine service, and such acts of kindness, generosity, and charity to each other, as tended to confirm them in the true religion, and in the love of that happy constitution.

As to the civil and judicial laws here prescribed, they cannot but seem, to any reasonable man, to be far the best body of rules that are to be found on the records of any nation ; as making the surest provision for the honour of magistracy and government, and for securing the rights and properties of the people, and not only so, but for advancing that benevolence and mutual love, as well as common justice to each other, which are the strongest cements of society.

- 3 If his offering [be] a burnt sacrifice of the herd,* let him offer a male without blemish : he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation
4 before the LORD. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering ; and it shall be accepted for him to
5 make atonement for him. And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD, *by the hands of the priests or Levites* ; and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and 'sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar, that [is by] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
- 6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his
7 pieces. And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon
8 the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire. And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that [is] on the fire which [is]
9 upon the altar. But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water : and the priest shall burn all on the altar, [to be] a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.
- 10 And if his offering [be] of the flocks, [namely,] of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt sacrifice' ; he shall bring it
11 a male without blemish. And he shall kill it on the side of the altar northward before the LORD : and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar ;
12 And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat : and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that [is]
13 on the fire which [is] upon the altar : But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water : and the priest shall bring [it] all, and burn [it] upon the altar : it [is] a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.
- 14 And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD [be] of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves,
15 or of young pigeons. And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn [it] on the altar ; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar :
16 And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes :

The historical parts of this Book are few, but very instructive ; chiefly for creating in men a just veneration for all persons and things consecrated to the service of God.

* * * This introduction, which is continued in the above note, is taken from a Critical and Practical Exposition of the Pentateuch, by *Jameson* ; a work but little known, though exceeding valuable. The Editor could easily have enriched this volume with a variety of useful and curious notes from this excellent writer, but was fearful of swelling the publication, and defeating the end designed, which was a Short and Plain Exposition for the use of Families.

* There were five sorts of sacrifices ; burnt offerings, *ch. i.* meat offerings, *ch. 2.* peace offerings, *ch. 3.* sin offerings, *ch. 4.* and trespass offerings, *ch. v. 15.* &c. The burnt offering was the first and principal, wherewith God was served every day by the children of Israel, (*Num. xviii. 3.*) so called, because it was all burnt, *c. 8, 9, 13.* except the skin, (*ch. vii. 8.*) whereas of all other sacrifices only part was burnt.

- 17 And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, [but] shall not divide [it] asunder : and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that [is] upon the fire : it [is] a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.
-

CHAP. II.

Contains an account of the meat offering of flour with oil and incense ; of the first fruits in the ear ; and the salt of the meat offering.

- 1 **A**ND when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD; *a distinct offering of itself, and not joined with others, as some meat offerings were, (Num. xv. 4.)* his offering shall be [of] fine flour ; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon : And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests : and he, *the priest to whom he brings it,* shall take thereof his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof ; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, [to be] an offering
- 2 made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD : And the remnant of the meat offering [shall be] Aaron's and his sons, *for their maintenance, (Num. xviii. 9, 10.) to be eaten in the sanctuary, (ch. vi. 16.)* [it is] a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.
- 3 And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering *baken* in the oven, [it shall be] unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- 4 And if thy oblation [be] a meat offering [baken] in a pan,
- 5 it shall be [of] fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil. Thou shalt part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon : it [is] a meat offering.
- 6 And if thy oblation [be] a meat offering [baken] in the
- 7 frying pan, it shall be made [of] fine flour with oil. And thou shalt bring the meat offering that is made of these things unto the LORD : and when it is presented unto the
- 8 priest, he shall bring it unto the altar. And the priest shall take from the meat offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn [it] upon the altar : [it is] an offering made by fire, of
- 9 a sweet savour unto the LORD. And that which is left of the meat offering [shall be] Aaron's and his sons' : [it is] a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.
- 10 No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, *which is offered of free will, shall be made with leaven ; (in other offerings it might be used, ch. vii. 13. xxiii. 17.)* for ye

shall burn no leaven nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

12 As for the oblation of the first fruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD : but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

13 And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt ; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering : with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

14 And if thou offer a meat offering of thy first fruits unto the LORD, *a free will offering, beside what was enjoined, ch. xxii. 29.* thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy first fruits, green ears of corn dried by the fire, [even] corn beaten out of full ears. And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon ; it [is] a meat offering. And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, [part] of the beaten corn thereof, and [part] of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof : [it is] an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

CHAP. III.

Contains an account of the peace offering of the herd, and of the flock.

- 1 **A**ND if his oblation [be] a sacrifice of peace offering,* if he offer [it] of the herd ; whether [it be] a male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.
- 2 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation : *the burnt offering was killed near the altar, (ch. i. 11.) but this was not so holy, part of it being eaten by the offerer, whereas the other was eaten by the priests only :* And Aaron's sons, the priests, shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about. And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire unto the LORD ; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that [is] upon the inwards. And the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] on them, which [is] by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away. And Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice, which [is] upon the wood that [is] on the fire : [it is] an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.
- 6 And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering unto the LORD [be] of the flock ; male or female, he shall offer it

* These were offered either to obtain some blessing which they wanted, or by way of thanksgiving for some mercy received ; and sometimes when men in their troubles prayed to God for peace and deliverance. *Judg. ix. 26. xxi. 4. 1 Chron. xxi. 26.*

- 7 without blemish. If he offer a lamb for his offering, then
 8 shall he offer it before the LORD. And he shall lay his hand
 upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the taberna-
 cle of the congregation : and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the
 9 blood thereof round about upon the altar. And he shall
 offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by
 fire unto the LORD ; the fat thereof, [and] the whole rump,
 it shall he take off hard by the back bone ; and the fat that
 covereth the inwards, and all the fat that [is] upon the in-
 10 wards, And the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] upon them,
 which [is] by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with
 11 the kidneys, it shall he take away. And the priest shall
 burn it upon the altar : [it is] the food of the offering made
 by fire unto the LORD, *that which the fire was to eat up and*
consume.
 12 And if his offering [be] a goat, then he shall offer it before
 13 the LORD. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it,
 and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation : and the
 sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar
 14 round about. And he shall offer thereof his offering, [even]
 an offering made by fire unto the LORD ; the fat that covereth
 15 the inwards, and all the fat that [is] upon the inwards, And the
 two kidneys, and the fat that [is] upon them, which [is] by the
 flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall
 16 he take away. And the priest shall burn them upon the al-
 tar : [it is] the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet
 savour : all the fat [is] the LORD's, *reserved as God's por-*
tion to be burnt upon the altar, (ch. iv. 8—10. xvii. 6. Deut.
xxxii. 38. and 1 Sam. ii. 15, 16.)
 17 [It shall be] a perpetual statute for your generations
 throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor
 blood.

CHAP. IV.

*Contains an account of the sin offering of ignorance, for the priest,
 the congregation, the ruler, or for the people.*

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
 2 the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin
 through ignorance against any of the commandments of the
 LORD [concerning things] which ought not to be done, and
 shall do against any of them :
 3 If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin
 of the people ; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath
 sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for
 4 a sin offering. And he shall bring the bullock unto the door

of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD ; and
 shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bul-
 5 lock before the LORD. And the priest that is anointed shall
 take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the
 6 congregation. And the priest shall dip his finger in the
 blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD,
 7 before the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put
 [some] of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet in-
 cense before the LORD, which [is] in the tabernacle of the
 congregation ; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at
 the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which [is at]
 8 the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he
 shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offer-
 ing ; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that
 9 [is] upon the inwards, And the two kidneys, and the fat
 that [is] upon them, which [is] by the flanks, and the caul
 10 above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away, As it
 was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offer-
 ings : and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the
 11 burnt offering. And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh,
 with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his
 12 dung, Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without
 the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured
 out, and burn him on the wood with fire : where the ashes
 are poured out shall he be burnt.
 13 And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through igno-
 rance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, (*as*
in chap. v. 2, 3, 4.) and they have done [somewhat against]
 any of the commandments of the LORD [concerning things]
 14 which should not be done, and are guilty : When the sin,
 which they have sinned against it, is known, then the con-
 gregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring
 15 him before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the el-
 ders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head
 of the bullock before the LORD : and the bullock shall be
 16 killed before the LORD. And the priest that is anointed
 shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the con-
 17 gregation : And the priest shall dip his finger [in some] of
 the blood, and sprinkle [it] seven times before the LORD,
 18 [even] before the veil. And he shall put [some] of the blood
 upon the horns of the altar which [is] before the LORD, that
 [is] in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out
 all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering,
 which [is at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
 19 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn [it] upon
 20 the altar. And he shall do with the bullock as he did with
 the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this : and
 the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be

- 21 forgiven them. And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock : it [is] a sin offering for the congregation.
- 22 When a ruler hath sinned, and done [somewhat] through ignorance [against] any of the commandments of the LORD his God [concerning things] which should not be done, and
- 23 is guilty ; Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge ; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a
- 24 male without blemish : And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the
- 25 burnt offering before the LORD : it [is] a sin offering. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar
- 26 of burnt offering. And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings : and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him, *as to all ecclesiastical censures, or civil punishments.*
- 27 And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth [somewhat against] any of the commandments of the LORD [concerning things] which ought not
- 28 to be done, and be guilty ; Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge : then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin
- 29 which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place
- 30 of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof
- 31 at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings ; and the priest shall burn [it] upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD ; and the priest shall make
- 32 an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female
- 33 without blemish. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place
- 34 where they kill the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar :
- 35 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings ; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD : and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

CHAP. V.

Of the trespass offering of one that sinneth in concealing his knowledge ; in touching an unclean thing ; or in making an oath ; of the trespass offering in sacrilege, and in sins of ignorance.

- 1 **A**ND if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and [is] a witness, whether he hath seen or known [of it ;]
- 2 if he do not utter [it,] then he shall bear his iniquity. Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether [it be] a carcass of an unclean beast, or a carcass of unclean cattle, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and [if] it be hidden from him ; he also shall be *esteemed* unclean, and *ceremonially*
- 3 guilty. Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness [it be] that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him ; when he knoweth [of it,] then he shall be
- 4 guilty. Or if a soul swear *rashly and unadvisedly*, pronouncing with [his] lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever [it be] that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him, *that what he swears to do was or would be impossible or unlawful* ; when he knoweth [of it,] then he shall be guilty in one of these, *in swearing rashly to do either good or*
- 5 *evil*. And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these [things,] that he shall confess *before the Lord, in the place of*
- 6 *public worship*, that he hath sinned in that [thing :] And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering ; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.
- 7 And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD ; one for a sin offering,
- 8 and the other for a burnt offering. And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer [that] which [is] for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall
- 9 not divide [it] asunder : And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar ; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar : it
- 10 [is] a sin offering. And he shall offer the second [for] a burnt offering, according to the manner : and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.
- 11 But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons ; then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering : he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put [any] frankincense
- 12 thereon : for it [is] a sin offering. Then shall he bring it to

- the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, [even] a memorial thereof, and burn [it] on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD : it [is] a sin offering.
- 13 And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him : and [the remnant] shall be the priest's, as a meat offering.
- 14 15 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD ; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the LORD a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering ; And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest : and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering, and it shall be forgiven him.
- 17 And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD ; though he wist [it] not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity. And he shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest : and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred and wist [it] not, and
- 19 it shall be forgiven him. It [is] a trespass offering : he hath certainly trespassed against the LORD.

CHAP. VI.

Of the trespass offering for sins done knowingly ; and the offering at the consecration of a priest.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul sin,
 2 and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour ; Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely ; in any of all
 4 these that a man doeth, sinning therein ; Then shall it be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered to him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely ; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, [and] give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his tres-

- 6 pass offering, *or, in the day of his being found guilty.* And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest : And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD : and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.
- 8 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This [is] the law of the burnt offering : It [is] the burnt offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it. And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen breeches shall be put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. And he shall put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes without the camp unto a clean place. And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it ; it shall not be put out : and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it ; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar ; it shall never go out.
- 14 And this [is] the law of the meat offering : the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar. And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which [is] upon the meat offering, and shall burn [it] upon the altar [for] a sweet savour, [even] the memorial of it, unto the LORD. And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat : with unleavened bread shall it be eaten in the holy place ; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it. It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it [unto them for] their portion of my offerings made by fire ; it [is] most holy, as [is] the sin offering, and as the trespass offering. All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it. [It shall be] a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD made by fire : every one that toucheth them shall be holy ; *rather, every thing, (v. 27, 28.) as knife, spoon, &c. that touches them, shall not be employed in common uses.*
- 19 20 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This [is] the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD in the day when he is anointed, *as they come to be consecrated high priests successively ;* the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a meat offering perpetual, ~~whenever~~ *any of them shall be so anointed,* half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night. In a pan it shall be made with oil ;

- [and when it is] baken, thou shalt bring it in : [and] the baken pieces of the meat offering shalt thou offer [for] a
 22 sweet savour unto the LORD. And the priest of his sons that is anointed in his stead shall offer it : [it is] a statute for ever
 23 unto the LORD ; it shall be wholly burnt. For every meat offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt : it shall not be eaten.
 24 25 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This [is] the law of the sin offering : In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin
 26 offering be killed before the LORD : it [is] most holy. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it : in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congre-
 27 gation. Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy : and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt wash that whereon it was sprink-
 28 led in the holy place. But the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken : and if it be sodden in a brazen
 29 pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water. All the males among the priests shall eat thereof : it [is] most holy.
 30 And no sin offering, whereof [any] of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile [withal] in the holy [place,] shall be eaten : it shall be burnt in the fire.

CHAP. VII.

Of the law of the trespass offering, and of the peace offerings ; the fat and the blood are forbidden to be eaten.

- 1 **L**IKewise this [is] the law of the trespass offering :
 2 it [is] most holy. In the place where they kill the burnt offering shall they kill the trespass offering : and the blood thereof shall he sprinkle round about upon the altar.
 3 And he shall offer of it all the fat thereof ; the rump, and the
 4 fat that covereth the inwards, And the two kidneys, and the fat that [is] on them, which [is] by the flanks, and the caul [that is] above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take
 5 away : And the priest shall burn them upon the altar [for] an offering made by fire unto the LORD : it [is] a trespass
 6 offering. Every male among the priests shall eat thereof ;
 7 it shall be eaten in the holy place : it [is] most holy. As the sin offering [is,] so [is] the trespass offering : [there is] one law for them : the priest that maketh atonement there-
 8 with shall have [it.] And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, [even] the priest shall have to himself the skin
 9 of the burnt offering which he hath offered. And all the meat

offering that is baken in the oven, (*except that part reserved by God, chap. ii. 2, 9.*) and all that is dressed in the frying pan, and in the pan, shall be the priests that offereth it. And every meat offering, mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, one [as much] as another, *it shall be equally divided among all the priests.*

11 And this [is] the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings,
12 which he shall offer unto the LORD. If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, 13 fried. Beside the cakes, he shall offer [for] his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings. And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation [for] an heave offering unto the LORD, [and] it shall be the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace offerings. 15 And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered ; he shall 16 not leave any of it until the morning. But if the sacrifice of his offering [be] a vow, *offered in performance of a vow*, or a voluntary offering, *by way of thankfulness for some mercy received*, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice : and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten : 17 But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice on the third 18 day shall be burnt with fire, *lest it should putrify*. And if [any] of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it, *as an acceptable service to God, but accounted as if it had not been offered at all ;* it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall 19 bear *the punishment* of his iniquity. And the flesh of the *peace offerings* that toucheth any unclean [thing] shall not be eaten ; it shall be burnt with fire : and as for the flesh *which abides clean, and is fit to be eaten*, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

20 But the soul that eateth [of] the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, that [pertain] unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his 21 people. (*See Gen. xiii. 14.*) Moreover, the soul that shall touch any unclean [thing, as] the uncleanness of man, or [any] unclean beast, or any abominable unclean [thing,] and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which [pertain] unto the LORD, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of fat, 24 of ox, or of sheep, or of goat. And the fat of the beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts,

- may be used in any other use : but ye shall in no wise eat
 25 of it. For whosoever eateth the fat of the beast, of which
 men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the
 26 soul that eateth [it] shall be cut off from his people. More-
 over ye shall eat no manner of blood, [whether it be] of fowl
 27 or of beast, in any of your dwellings. Whatsoever soul [it
 be] that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be
 cut off from his people.
- 28 29 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
 the children of Israel, saying, He that offereth the sacrifice
 of his peace offerings unto the LORD, *that portion which was given*
out of his peace offerings, shall bring his oblation to the taberna-
 30 cle unto the LORD of the sacrifice of his peace offerings. His
 own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire,
 the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that the breast may
 31 be waved [for] a wave offering before the LORD. And the
 priest shall burn the fat upon the altar : but the breast shall
 32 be Aaron's and his sons'. And the right shoulder shall ye
 give unto the priest [for] an heave offering of the sacrifices
 33 of your peace offerings. He among the sons of Aaron, that
 offereth the blood of the peace offerings, and the fat, shall
 34 have the right shoulder for [his] part. For the wave breast
 and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel
 from off the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given
 them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons by a statute for
 35 ever from among the children of Israel. This [is the por-
 tion] of the anointing of Aaron, *or, which he had by reason of*
his anointing, and of the anointing of his sons, out of the offer-
 ings of the LORD made by fire, in the day [when] he present-
 ed them to minister unto the LORD in the priest's office, *from*
 36 *that day forward for ever* ; Which the LORD commanded to be
 given them of the children of Israel, in the day that he
 anointed them, [by] a statute for ever throughout their gener-
 ations.
- 37 This [is] the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering,
 and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the
 consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings ;
 28 Which the LORD commanded Moses in mount Sinai, in the
 day that he commanded the children of Israel to offer their
 oblations unto the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

CHAP. VIII.

We have here an account of Moses consecrating Aaron and his sons ; their sin offering ; their burnt offering ; the ram of consecrations ; and the place and time of their consecration.

- 1 **AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take Aaron
 2 and his sons with him, and the garments, and the
 anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two
 3 rams, and a basket of unleavened bread ; And gather thou
 all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle
 4 of the congregation. And Moses did as the LORD com-
 manded him ; and the assembly was gathered together unto
 5 the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Moses
 said unto the congregation, This [is] the thing which the
 6 LORD commanded to be done. And Moses brought Aaron
 7 and his sons, and washed them with water. And he put on
 him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed
 him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded
 him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound [it]
 8 unto him therewith. . And he put the breastplate upon him :
 also he put in the breastplate the Urim and the Thummim.
 9 And he put the mitre upon his head ; also upon the mitre,
 [even] upon his forefront, did he put the golden plate,
 10 the holy crown ; as the LORD commanded Moses. And
 Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and
 11 all that [was] therein, and sanctified them. And he sprink-
 led thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar
 and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify
 12 them. And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's
 13 head, and anointed him, to sanctify him. And Moses brought
 Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with
 girdles, and put bonnets upon them ; as the LORD command-
 ed Moses.
- 14 And he brought the bullock for the sin offering : and
 Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bul-
 15 lock for the sin offering. And he slew [it ;] and Moses took
 the blood, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar round
 about with his finger, and purified the altar, and pour-
 ed the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to
 16 make reconciliation upon it. And he took all the fat that
 [was] upon the inwards, and the caul [above] the liver, and
 the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned [it] upon
 17 the altar. But the bullock, and his hide, his flesh, and his
 dung, he burnt with fire without the camp ; as the LORD
 commanded Moses.
- 18 And he brought the ram for the burnt offering : and
 Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the

- 19 ram. And he killed [it ;] and Moses sprinkled the blood
20 upon the altar round about. And he cut the ram into pieces ;
21 and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat. And
he washed the inwards and the legs in water ; and Moses
burnt the whole ram upon the altar : it [was] a burnt sacri-
fice for a sweet savour, [and] an offering made by fire
unto the Lord ; as the Lord commanded Moses.
- 22 And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration :
and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the
23 ram. And he slew [it ;] and Moses took of the blood of it,
and put [it] upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the
thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right
24 foot. And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the
blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of
their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet :
and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.
- 25 And he took the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that [was]
upon the inwards, and the caul [above] the liver, and the
26 two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder : And out
of the basket of unleavened bread, that [was] before the
Lord, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled
bread, and one wafer, and put [them] on the fat, and upon
27 the right shoulder : And he put all upon Aaron's hands, and
upon his sons' hands, and waved them [for] a wave offering
28 before the Lord. And Moses took them from off their hands,
and burnt [them] on the altar upon the burnt offering : they
[were] consecrations for a sweet savour : it [is] an offering
29 made by fire unto the Lord. And Moses took the breast,
and waved it [for] a wave offering before the Lord : [for] of
the ram of consecration it was Moses' part ; as the Lord
commanded Moses.
- 30 And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood
which [was] upon the altar, and sprinkled [it] upon Aaron,
[and] upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his
sons' garments, with him ; and sanctified Aaron, [and] his
garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.
- 31 And Moses said unto Aaron and to his sons, Boil the flesh
[at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation : and
there eat it with the bread that [is] in the basket of conse-
crations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall
32 eat it. And that which remaineth of the flesh and of the
bread, shall ye burn with fire.
- 33 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of
the congregation [in] seven days, until the days of your con-
secration be at an end : for seven days shall he consecrate
34 you. As he hath done this day, [so] the Lord hath com-
35 manded to do, to make an atonement for you. Therefore
shall ye abide [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congræ-

gation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not : for so I am commanded.

- 36 So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

CHAP. IX.

Contains an account of Aaron's sin offering and burnt offering for himself and the people ; the people blessed ; and of the fire from heaven consuming the burnt offering.

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass on the eighth day, [that] Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel ;
- 2 And he said unto Aaron, Take thee a young calf for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer [them] before the LORD, *to make atonement for thyself and the people, (v. 7.)*
- 3 And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering ; and a calf and a lamb, [both] of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering *for the people ; (v. 15.)*
- 4 Also a bullock and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD : and a meat offering mingled with oil : for to-day the LORD will appear unto you, *in a glorious manner, (v. 24.)*
- 5 And they brought [that] which Moses commanded before the tabernacle of the congregation : and all the congregation drew near and stood before the LORD, *at the door of the tabernacle, where the glory of the Lord appeared. And Moses said, This [is] the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do : and the glory of the LORD, the glorious manifestation of God's powerful and gracious presence, (v. 24.)*
- 6 And they shall appear unto you. And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people : and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them ; as the LORD commanded.
- 7 Aaron therefore went unto the altar, and slew the calf of the sin offering, which [was] for himself. And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him : and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar : But the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin offering, he burnt upon the altar ; as the LORD commanded Moses.
- 8 And the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire without the camp. And he slew the burnt offering ; and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar. And they presented the burnt offer-

- ing unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head : and he
14 burnt [them] upon the altar. And he did wash the inwards
and the legs, and burnt [them] upon the burnt offering on
15 the altar. And he brought the people's offering, and took the
goat, which [was] the sin offering for the people, and slew it,
16 and offered it for sin, as the first. And he brought the burnt
offering, and offered it according to the manner, *or ordinance*.
17 And he brought the meat offering, and took an handful there-
of and burnt [it] upon the altar, beside the burnt sacrifice of
18 the morning. He slew also the bullock and the ram [for] a
sacrifice of peace offerings, which [was] for the people : and
Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprink-
19 led upon the altar round about. And the fat of the bullock
and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth [the in-
20 wards,] and the kidneys, and the caul [above] the liver : And
they put the fat upon the breasts, and he burnt the fat upon
21 the altar : And the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron
waved [for] a wave offering before the LORD ; as Moses
22 commanded. And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the peo-
ple, and blessed them ; *he prayed to God for his blessing upon*
them, and particularly for his gracious acceptance of these and
all succeeding sacrifices ; and came down from offering of the
sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.
23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the con-
gregation, and came out, and blessed the people a second
time : and the glory of the LORD, *an extraordinary splendor,*
or brightness, appearing out of the cloudy pillar, (as Exodus
xvi. 10,) appeared unto all the people, which was a token of
24 *God's gracious acceptance of them and their services.* And
there came a fire, *which was to be carefully kept, and not suf-*
fered to be extinguished, out from before the LORD, from the
holy of holies, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering
and the fat, *in token of his approbation of the priesthood now in-*
stituted, and the sacrifices now offered ; [which] when all the
people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces, wondering at,
rejoicing in, and blessing God for this extraordinary and gra-
cious discovery of himself, and his favour therein. See Gen.
xvii. 3.

CHAP. X.

This is the next historical chapter to Exodus xxxiv. After the tabernacle was raised, and Aaron and his sons consecrated, he offered a sin offering and a burnt offering for himself and the people: when this was finished, he blessed the people in the name of God, and fire came down in token of God's acceptance of the priesthood and the sacrifices. Upon this, the people shouted with astonishment and joy, and fell on their faces to worship God. Then follows the melancholy story before us.

- 1 **A**ND Nadab and Abihu, the two eldest sons of Aaron, who had been with him in the mount, and seen the glory of the Lord, took either of them his censer, or chafing dish, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, other than what was on the altar, which was sent from heaven, (ch. ix. 24.) which he commanded them not.*
- 2 And there went out fire from the LORD, from the sanctuary, or altar of burnt offering, and devoured them, struck them with sudden death, for neither their bodies nor clothes were consumed, and they died before the LORD; an awful providence, designed as
- 3 a warning to others. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This [is it] that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, be revered, and not mocked, or trifled with, (see Exodus xix. 22.) and before all the people I will be glorified, have the glory of my sovereignty acknowledged, by an exact conformity to my laws. And Aaron held his peace, in
- 4 humble submission to this awful providence. And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp, to the usual place of bury-
- 5 ing. So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said; in their consecrated garments, but which, being now polluted, by touching a dead body, must be worn no more. A sad, instructive, and affecting sight to
- 6 the whole camp! And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; put not off your priestly dress, nor put on the habit of mourning; let not the public service be interrupted by your private afflictions; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled; let them lament the dishonour done to God, and be con-
- 7 vinced, that with him is terrible majesty. And ye shall not go

* There might be some particular prohibition of this, though it is not come down to us. But probably this was not all, for it is generally supposed that the young men were intoxicated with pride or liquor, or both, and ventured into the holy place at a time not appointed, and both together; whereas one priest alone was to burn incense on the golden altar.

out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die : for the anointing oil of the LORD [is] upon you : *you are persons peculiarly consecrated to God's service ; which therefore you must prefer before all funeral solemnities.* And they did according to the word of Moses ; *which was an eminent act of obedience, in these mournful circumstances.*

- 9 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die : [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations :*
- 10 And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy,
- 11 and between unclean and clean, *which they did not ;* And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses, *which persons inflamed with strong drink are unfit to do.*
- 12 And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, Take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar : for it [is] most holy :
- 13 And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it [is] thy due, and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire :
- 14 for so I am commanded.† And the wave breast and heave shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place, *in any place within the camp, so that it be free from ceremonial pollution ;* thou, and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee : for [they be] thy due, and thy sons' due, [which] are given out of the sacrifices of peace
- 15 offerings of the children of Israel. The heave shoulder and the wave breast shall they bring with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave [it for] a wave offering before the LORD ; and it shall be thine, and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever ; as the LORD hath commanded.
- 16 And Moses, *notwithstanding his grief on this occasion, and his sympathy with Aaron and his sons, was very exact in the observance of every positive precept, and diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and, behold, it was burnt ; those parts of the goat were burnt upon the altar which they should have eaten themselves, (see ch. vi. 26.)* and he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron [which were] left [alive,]
- 17 saying, Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it [is] most holy, and [God] hath given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD ; *as a reward for your services in bearing, that is, expiating, the sin of the people ?*‡

* This seems to intimate that Nadab and Abihu had done so, v. 1.

† Moses reminds them of their duty, lest this affair should have put it out of their thoughts : this judgment was not so to affect them, as to make them forget their meat, or neglect their duty.

‡ The priest's eating the sin offering of the people, signified, that their sin was in some sort laid upon him ; hence we may see in what sense Christ is said to bear our sins.

- 18 Behold, the blood of it was not brought in within the holy [place :] ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy [place :] as I commanded. *Thus Moses reprov'd the sin of Aaron gently, knowing how much he was already afflicted, and not being willing*
- 19 *to increase it.* And Aaron said unto Moses, *as an excuse for his conduct,* Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD ; *they have done the substance of the command, though one circumstance has been omitted :* and such things have befallen me, *such a dreadful calamity, that my mind is overwhelmed with grief :* and [if] I had eaten the sin offering today, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD, *when I could not rejoice before him, as I am commanded in this case to do ? I chose therefore to give it wholly to God, rather than eat it in these melancholy circumstances.*
- 20 And when Moses heard [that,] he was content ; *because it was not a wilful contempt of God, and lest he should add affliction to the afflicted.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E here learn with what reverence we should worship God. This is what the Lord teaches us in this chapter, *I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified, v. 3.* It is a lesson to Israel, to all its tribes, and to the church in all ages and generations. We see here that God is greatly to be feared, and to be had in reverence by all that draw nigh unto him. *God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Let us sanctify him in our hearts ; considering him as the most holy being, *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.* Let us glorify him before all the people, by making a public profession of our faith, and encouraging others to do so. God requires this of us ; and if not done, he may justly punish us. Let us be careful that our worship be such as he requires of us ; and not add to it any of our own inventions. It is a just and important remark of Bishop HALL, that 'It is a dangerous thing in the worship of God, to decline from his own institutions : we have to do with a Being who is wise to prescribe his own worship, just to require what he hath prescribed, and powerful to revenge what he hath not required.' Let us keep close therefore to what the Lord hath said ; and learn from this instructive story, as the apostle exhorts, *Heb. xii. 29.* (where he seems to allude to it) *to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.*

2. How cautious should christian ministers be in the whole of their conduct ! They are peculiarly obliged, by their relation to God, to glorify him ; to display his glory before men ; to be defenders of the divine honour ; to be careful not to err through rashness or fancy ; if they do, they are very unfit to separate

between the precious and the vile, and to teach men God's statutes. May they all be sober and temperate, serious and considerate, in every thing ; have always clear heads and clean hearts ; for holiness becomes God's house and ministers, and his worshippers, for ever.

3. Let us adore the patience of God, which bears with the many imperfections of our services. We are too ready to offer strange fire. The heart is often far from him, and we are too frequently rash in entering into his presence, without due thought and attention. Yet he mercifully overlooks our unallowed imperfections, and pardons what is amiss. Let us adore his long suffering and compassion toward us, but not take encouragement from thence to sin.

4. Let us humbly resign ourselves to the will of God, maintain a respectful silence before him : and prosecute his service amidst the heaviest affliction : so Aaron did. Let us *be still, and know that he is God*. He hath wise ends in those dispensations that seem most severe. We should *be dumb and not open our mouths before him*, when he hath bereaved us of our children, or our friends, or when he removes his ministers and servants. We have still reason to say, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* ; especially as his glory will be promoted thereby, as Moses here suggests. And let the same principles of faith in God's providences and promises, which promote submission, excite us to the vigorous discharge of our duty : Moses directs Aaron and his sons to *go on with their work*. Let us not sink under our losses, for this is no proper token of regard to our departed friends ; it is ungrateful to God, and unfits us for duty. Let us therefore guard against excess of sorrow. Weeping must not hinder sowing.*

5. Let us learn to be content with reasonable excuses from our inferiours, and be glad to find them less to blame than we imagined. Moses was willing to make favourable allowances : as he knew God would. Let us not bear hard on those who we think have done ill. Perhaps they may have something to say that will satisfy us, or lessen their guilt. We should be willing to believe and hope the best of every one.

6. Let us rejoice in the perfect priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This unhappy circumstance at the opening of the Jewish priesthood, showed its imperfection. The law made men priests, that had infirmities ; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore, *Heb. vii. 28*. In him we may rejoice ; and cheerfully present our sacrifices through his pure hands, and in humble reliance on his prevailing atonement ; knowing that he always appears before the presence of God, and *ever lives to make intercession for us*.

* See Henry on Psalm cxxvi. 6.

CHAP. XI.

This, and the four following chapters, relate only to ceremonial observances.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, and to Aaron, (*because it belonged both to the magistrates and priests to*
 2 *see these laws executed,*) saying unto them, Speak unto the
 children of Israel, saying, These [are] the beasts which ye
 shall eat among all the beasts which [are] on the earth.*
 3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven footed, [and]
 4 cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or
 of them that divide the hoof: [as] the camel, because he
 cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he [is] unclean
 5 unto you.† And the coney,‡ because he cheweth the cud,
 6 but divideth not the hoof; he [is] unclean unto you. And
 the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the
 7 hoof; he [is] unclean unto you. And the swine, though he
 divide the hoof and be cloven footed, yet he cheweth not the
 8 cud; he [is] unclean to you.|| Of their flesh shall ye not
 eat, and their carcass shall ye not touch; they [are] unclean
 to you.
- 9 These shall ye eat of all that [are] in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, *in the ponds and*
 10 *lakes,* in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. And
 all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers,
 of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which
 [is] in the waters, they [shall be] an abomination unto you:
 11 They shall be even an abomination unto you; ye shall not
 eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcasses in abomina-
 12 tion. Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that
 [shall be] an abomination unto you. *This is repeated, as being*
the only rule they had to judge by in this case.
- 13 And these [are they which] ye shall have in abomination
 among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they [are] an
 abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, *the bone breaker,*
a species of the eagle with a strong bill, and the osprey, *or sea*
 14 *eagle.* And the vulture, and the kite, after his kind; Every
 15 raven after his kind; And the owl, and the night hawk, and
 16 the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, And the little owl,

* Considering that all beasts were given for food to Noah, it may be asked, How came there to be these restrictions afterward? Perhaps it was to discourage luxury, but principally to keep them a distinct people; because those beasts were forbidden, which were in the highest esteem among the heathen, and were offered in sacrifices to their gods.

† The camel divides the hoof at the top, but not at the bottom.

‡ Or, mountain mouse, for common rabbits do not chew the cud, nor make their house in the rock, as Prov. xxx. 26.

|| This beast, though most respected among the heathen, was held in the highest detestation by the Jews.

- 17 and the cormorant, and the great owl, And the swan, and the
 18 pelican, and the ger eagle, And the stork, the heron after
 19 her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.
 20 All fowls, *it should be translated insects*, that creep, going
 21 upon [all] four, [shall be] an abomination unto you. Yet
 these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth
 upon [all] four, which have legs above their feet, to leap
 22 withal upon the earth ; [Even] these of them ye may eat ;
 the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and
 the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind:
 23 But all [other] flying creeping things, which have four feet,
 [shall be] an abomination unto you.
 24 And for these ye shall be unclean : whosoever toucheth
 25 the carcass of them shall be unclean until the even. And
 whosoever beareth [aught] of the carcass of them shall wash
 26 his clothes, and be unclean until the even. [The carcasses]
 of every beast which divideth the hoof, and [is] not cloven
 footed, nor cheweth the cud, [are] unclean unto you : every
 27 one that toucheth them shall be unclean. And whatsoever
 goeth upon his paws, *on his two hands, which has forefeet di-*
vided into fingers, as monkeys, cats, dogs, bears, among all
 manner of beasts that go on [all] four, those [are] unclean
 unto you : whoso toucheth their carcass shall be unclean un-
 28 til the even. And he that beareth the carcass of them shall
 wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even : they [are]
 unclean unto you.
 29 These also [shall be] unclean unto you among the creep-
 ing things that creep upon the earth ; the weasel, and the
 30 mouse, and the tortoise after his kind, And the ferret, and
 the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.
 31 These [are] unclean to you among all that creep : whoso-
 ever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean
 32 until the even. And upon whatsoever [any] of them, when
 they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean ; whether [it be]
 any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever
 vessel [it be,] wherein [any] work is done, it must be put
 into water, and it shall be unclean until the even ; so it shall
 33 be cleansed. And every earthen vessel, whereinto [any] of
 them falleth, whatsoever [is] in it shall be unclean ; and ye
 34 shall break it. Of all meat which may be eaten, [that] on
 which [such] water cometh shall be unclean ; and all drink that
 35 may be drunk in every [such] vessel shall be unclean. And
 every [thing] whereupon [any part] of their carcass falleth
 shall be unclean ; [whether it be] oven, or ranges for pots,
 they shall be broken down : [for] they [are] unclean, and
 36 shall be unclean unto you. Nevertheless, a fountain or pit,
 [wherein there is] plenty of water, shall be clean : but that
 which toucheth their carcass, *the man who draws them out, or*

- 37 *the instrument which he uses, shall be unclean. And if [any part] of their carcass fall upon any sowing seed which is to be sown, it [shall be] clean, because, before it was used it was to pass through so many changes, that all the contamination would be gone off.* But if [any] water be put upon the seed, or the corn intended for present use, and [any part] of their carcass fall thereon, it [shall be] unclean unto you. And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die of itself, or be strangled, or torn; he that toucheth the carcass thereof shall be unclean until the even. And he that eateth of the carcass of it unknowingly, (for if he did it presumptuously he was to be cut off; Num. xv. and xxx.) shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcass of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.
- 41 And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, except those mentioned before, v. 22. [shall be] an abomination; it shall not be eaten. Whatsoever goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon [all] four, or whatsoever hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth, them ye shall not eat; for they [are] an abomination.
- 43 Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.
- 44 For I [am] the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I [am] holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth: *as I am separated, by the excellency of my nature, from all other Beings, so shall you, by your purity, from all other people.* For I [am] the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I [am] holy.
- 46 This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

CHAP. XII.

Of women's purifications, and offerings.

- 1 **A**ND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
 2 the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and borne a man child: then she shall be unclean, seven days; according to the days of the separation for her
 3 infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the

- 4 **And** of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days, *beside the seven mentioned, v. 2.* she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled; *but for common things, and all* 5 *civil affairs, she was clean after the first seven days.* But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, *double to that for a male, v. 2.* as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.
- 6 And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, *to express her gratitude to God, and implore his blessing on her child,* and a young pigeon, or a turtledove for a sin offering, *(or rather, to cleanse her from her ceremonial pollution, ch. xv. 30.)* unto the door of the tabernacle of the 7 congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This [is] the law for 8 her that hath borne a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.
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CHAP. XIII.

Of the tokens to discern the leprosy.

- 1 **AND** the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,
 2 **When** a man shall have in the skin of his flesh a rising, a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh [like] the plague of leprosy; then he shall be brought unto 3 Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests: And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh; and [when] the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight [be] deeper than the skin of his flesh, it [is] a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and 4 pronounce him unclean. If the bright spot [be] white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight [be] not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof be not turned white; then the priest 5 shall shut up [him, that hath] the plague seven days: And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, [if] the plague in his sight be at a stay, *both in respect to colour and spreading,* [and] the plague spread not in the skin; 6 then the priest shall shut him up seven days more: And the

- priest shall look on him again the seventh day : and, behold, [if] the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean : it [is but]
- 7 a scab : and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean. But if the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing, he shall be seen of
- 8 the priest again : And [if] the priest see that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it [is] a leprosy.
- 9 When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall
- 10 be brought unto the priest ; And the priest shall see [him :] and, behold, [if] the rising [be] white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and [there be] quick raw flesh in the
- 11 rising ; It [is] an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut
- 12 him up : for he is unclean. And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of [him that hath] the plague from his head even to his foot, where-
- 13 soever the priest looketh ; Then the priest shall consider : and, behold, [if] the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce [him] clean [that hath] the plague : it is all turned white : he [is] clean ; *it is only a salt humour of body,*
- 14 *thrown out by the strength of his constitution.* But when raw flesh appeareth in him, he shall be unclean. *This was a sign that the poison of the disease was not wholly driven out, but did still lurk within the flesh, and so rendered the disease more dangerous to him that had it, and more infectious to others.*
- 15 And the priest shall see the raw flesh and pronounce him to be unclean : [for] the raw flesh [is] unclean : it [is] a lep-
- 16 rosy. Or if the raw flesh turn again, and be changed unto
- 17 white, he shall come unto the priest ; And the priest shall see him : and, behold, [if] the plague be turned into white ; then the priest shall pronounce [him] clean [that hath] the plague : he [is] clean, *though he may have the scurvy all over his body.*
- 18 The flesh also, in which, [even] in the skin thereof, was a
- 19 boil, and is healed, And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot, white, and somewhat reddish,
- 20 and it be showed to the priest ; And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it [be] in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white : the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it [is] a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.
- 21 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, [there be] no white hairs therein, and [if] it [be] not lower than the skin, but [be] somewhat dark ; then the priest shall shut him up seven
- 22 days : And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the
- 23 priest shall pronounce him unclean : it [is] a plague. But if the bright spot stay in his place, [and] spread not, it [is] a burning boil ; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

- 24 Or if there be [any] flesh, in the skin wherof [there is] a
 hot burning, and the quick [flesh] that burneth have a white
 25 bright spot, somewhat reddish, or white ; Then the priest
 shall look upon it : and, behold, if the hair in the bright spot
 be turned white, and it [be in] sight deeper than the skin ;
 it [is] a leprosy broken out of the burning : wherefore the
 priest shall pronounce him unclean : it [is] the plague of
 26 leprosy. But if the priest look on it, and, behold, [there be]
 no white hair in the bright spot, and it [be] no lower than the
 — [other] skin, but [be] somewhat dark ; then the priest shall
 27 shut him up seven days : And the priest shall look upon him
 the seventh day : [and] if it be spread much abroad in the
 skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean : it [is] the
 28 plague of leprosy. And if the bright spot stay in his place,
 [and] spread not in the skin, but it [be] somewhat dark ;
 it [is] a rising of the burning, and the priest shall pronounce
 him clean : for it [is] an inflammation of the burning.
- 29 If a man or woman have a plague upon the head or the
 30 beard ;* Then the priest shall see the plague : and, behold,
 if it [be] in sight deeper than the skin ; [and there be] in it
 a yellow thin hair ; then the priest shall pronounce him un-
 clean : it [is] a dry scall, [even] a leprosy upon the head
 31 or beard. And if the priest look on the plague of the scall,
 and, behold, it [be] not in sight deeper than the skin, and
 [that there is] no black hair in it ; then the priest shall shut
 32 up [him that hath] the plague of the scall seven days : And
 in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague :
 and, behold, [if] the scall spread not, and there be in it
 no yellow hair, and the scall [be] not in sight deeper than
 23 the skin : He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not
 shave : and the priest shall shut up [him that hath] the scall
 34 seven days more : And in the seventh day the priest shall
 look on the scall : and, behold, [if] the scall be not spread in
 the skin, nor [be] in sight deeper than the skin ; then the
 priest shall pronounce him clean : and he shall wash his
 35 clothes and be clean. But if the scall spread much in the
 36 skin after his cleansing ; Then the priest shall look on him ;
 and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall
 37 not seek for yellow hair ; he [is] unclean. But if the scall
 be in his sight at a stay, and [that] there is black hair grown
 up therein ; the scall is healed, he [is] clean : and the priest
 shall pronounce him clean.
- 38 If a man also or a woman have in the skin of their flesh
 29 bright spots, [even] white bright spots ; Then the priest
 shall look : and, behold, [if] the bright spots in the skin of

* This, among the Romans, was looked upon as a most dreadful distemper, even worse than death.

their flesh [be] darkish white ; it [is] a freckled spot [that] groweth in the skin ; he [is] clean.

40 And the man whose hair is fallen off his head, he [is] bald ;
 41 [yet is] he clean. And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he [is] forehead bald :
 42 [yet is] he clean. And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore ; it [is] a leprosy sprung up in
 43 his bald head or his bald forehead. Then the priest shall look upon it : and, behold, [if] the rising of the sore [be] white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the
 44 leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh ; He [is] a leprous man, he [is] unclean : the priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean : his plague [is] in his head.

45 And the leper in whom the plague [is,] his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, *cover it with his hand or garment, in token of sorrow and shame, (Ezek. xxiv. 17, 22. Mic. iii. 7.)* and shall cry,
 46 Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague [shall be] in him, he shall be defiled ; he [is] unclean : he shall dwell alone ; without the camp [shall] his habitation [be.]

47 The garment also that the plague of leprosy [is] in, [whether
 48 er it be] a woollen garment, or a linen garment ; Whether [it be] in the warp, or woof, *inside or outside* ; of linen, or of woollen ; whether in a skin, or in any thing made of skin ;
 49 And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin ; it [is] a plague of leprosy, and shall be
 50 showed unto the priest : And the priest shall look upon the
 51 plague, and shut up [it that hath] the plague, seven days : And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day : if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, [or] in any work that is made of skin ; the
 52 plague [is] a fretting leprosy ; it [is] unclean. He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is : for
 53 it [is] a fretting leprosy ; it shall be burnt in the fire. And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any
 54 thing of skin ; Then the priest shall command that they wash [the thing] wherein the plague [is,] and he shall shut it up
 55 seven days more : And the priest shall look on the plague, after that it is washed : and, behold, [if] the plague have not changed his colour, and, *or though*, the plague be not spread ; it [is] unclean ; thou shalt burn it in the fire ; it [is] fret inward,
 56 [whether] it [be] bare within or without. And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague [be] somewhat dark after the washing of it ; then he shall rend it out of the garment, or
 57 out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof : And

if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin ; it [is] a spreading [plague :]
 58 thou shalt burn that wherein the plague [is] with fire. And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin [it be,] which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.

59 This [is] the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp, or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean. *The leprosy of garments and houses, we, through divine mercy, know nothing of ; it was perhaps a plague peculiar to Canaan.*

CHAP. XIV.

The rites and sacrifices in cleansing of the leper ; the signs of leprosy in an house ; and the cleansing of that house.

1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This shall
 2 be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing :
 3 He shall be brought unto the priest : And the priest shall go forth out of the camp ; and the priest shall look, and, behold, [if] the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper ;
 4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive [and] clean, to denote that his flesh was now restored to the same soundness as other living creatures, whereas before it might be looked upon as dead, and cedar wood, which was incorruptible, to denote that the corruption of the humours of his body were removed, and scarlet, to denote that the colour of his blood was changed from a livid to a scarlet colour, and hyssop, to denote that the disagreeable smell proceeding from his leprosy was removed : And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel, over running water : As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird [that was]
 7 killed over the running water : And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field, to denote that the person cleansed was now at liberty to return to his former habitation, and converse with
 8 other men. And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean : and after that he shall come into the
 9 camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off : and he shall wash his clothes, also he

- 10 shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean. And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour [for] a meat offering, mingled
- 11 with oil, and one log of oil, *which held a pint*. And the priest that maketh [him] clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, [at] the door
- 12 of the tabernacle of the congregation : And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them [for] a wave offering before the
- 13 LORD : And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place : for as the sin offering [is] the priest's, [so is] the
- 14 trespass offering : it [is] most holy : And the priest shall take [some] of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put [it] upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, *to denote that he was now free to hear God's word, to touch any person or thing, and to go where he would* : And the priest shall take [some] of the log
- 15 of oil, and pour [it] into the palm of his own left hand : And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that [is] in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger
- 16 seven times before the LORD : And of the rest of the oil that [is] in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood
- 17 of the trespass offering : And the remnant of the oil that [is] in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed : and the priest shall make an atonement
- 18 for him before the LORD. And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness ; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. *This burnt offering is the gift mentioned, Mat. viii. 4.*
- 19 And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar : and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.
- 20 And if he [be] poor, and cannot get so much ; then he shall take one lamb [for] a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil ;
- 21 And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get ; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering. And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them [for] a wave offering before the LORD : And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass-

- offering, and the priest shall take [some] of the blood of the trespass offering, and put [it] upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right
- 36 hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot : And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand :
- 37 And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger [some] of the oil that [is] in his left hand seven times before the LORD :
- 38 And the priest shall put of the oil that [is] in his hand upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering : And the rest of the oil that [is] in the priest's hand he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed, to make
- 39 an atonement for him before the LORD. And he shall offer the one of the turtledoves, or of the young pigeons, such as
- 40 he can get ; [Even] such as he is able to get, the one [for] a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, with the meat offering : and the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed before the LORD.
- 41 This [is] the law [of him] in whom [is] the plague of leprosy, whose hand is not able to get [that which pertaineth] to his cleansing.
- 42 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
- 43 When ye be come into the land of Canaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession ; *(this plainly intimated, that it was a judgment inflicted by the immediate hand of God ;)*
- 44 And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me [there is] as it were a plague in the house : Then the priest shall command that they empty the house, before the priest go [into it] to see the plague, that all that [is] in the house be not made unclean : and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house : And he shall look on the plague, and, behold, [if] the plague [be] in the walls of the house with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish,
- 45 which in sight [are] lower than the wall ; Then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days : And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look : and, behold, [if] the
- 46 plague be spread in the walls of the house, Then the priest shall command that they take away the stones in which the plague [is,] and they shall cast them into an unclean place
- 47 without the city : And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place : And they shall take other stones, and put [them] in the place of those stones ; and he shall take other mortar and shall plaister the house. And if the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after

- 44 he hath scraped the-house, and after it is plaistered ; Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, [if] the plague be spread in the house, it [is] a fretting leprosy in the house :
- 45 it [is] unclean. And he shall break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house ; and he shall carry [them] forth out of the city into
- 46 an unclean place. Moreover, he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up shall be unclean until the even.
- 47 And he that lieth in the house shall wash his clothes ; and he that cateth in the house shall wash his clothes.
- 48 And if the priest shall come in, and look [upon it,] and, behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plaistered : then the priest shall pronounce the
- 49 house clean, because the plague is healed. And he shall take to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop : And he shall kill the one of the birds in
- 50 an earthen vessel over running water : And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the
- 52 running water, and sprinkle the house seven times : And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar
- 53 wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet : But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house : and it shall be clean.
- 54 This [is] the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and
- 55 scall, And for the leprosy of a garment, and of a house,
- 56 And for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot : To
- 57 teach when [it is] unclean, and when [it is] clean ; this [is] the law of the leprosy.

CHAP. XV.

Of uncleanness by issues, and their cleansing.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses and to Aaron, say-
- 2 ing, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When any man hath a running issue out of his flesh,
- 3 [because of] his issue he [is] unclean. And this shall be his uncleanness in his issue : whether his flesh run with his issue, or his flesh be stopped from his issue, it [is] his un-
- 4 cleanness. Every bed, whereon he lieth that hath the issue, is unclean : and every thing, whereon he sitteth, shall be un-
- 5 clean. And whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until
- 6 the even. And he that sitteth on [any] thing whereon he sat that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe

- 7 [himself] in water and be unclean until the even. And he that toucheth the flesh of him that hath the issue shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even.* And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean ; then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even. And what saddle soever he rideth upon that hath the issue shall be unclean. And whosoever toucheth any thing that was under him shall be unclean until the even : and he that beareth [any of] those things shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even. And whosoever he toucheth that hath the issue, and hath not rinsed his hands in water, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even. And the vessel of earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken : and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water. And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue ; then he shall number to himself seven days for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.
- 14 And on the eighth day he shall take to him two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, and come before the Lord unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest : And the priest shall offer them, the one [for] a sin offering ; and the other [for] a burnt offering ; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord for his issue. And if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even. And every garment, and every skin, whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even. The woman also with whom man shall lie [with] seed of copulation, they shall [both] bathe [themselves] in water, and be unclean until the even.
- 19 And if a woman have an issue, [and] her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be put apart seven days : and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even. And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean : every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean. And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even. And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even. And if it [be] on [her] bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even. And if any man lie with her at all,

* It is very probable that they had public baths in every town or city, as bathing was so frequently necessary.

- and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven
 25 days : and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean. And
 if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the
 time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her
 separation ; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall
 be as the days of her separation : she [shall be] unclean.
 26 Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be
 unto her as the bed of her separation : and whatsoever she sit-
 teth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separa-
 27 tion. And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean,
 and shall wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and
 28 be unclean until the even. But if she be cleansed of her issue,
 then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that
 29 she shall be clean. And on the eighth day she shall take
 unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring
 them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the con-
 30 gregation. And the priest shall offer the one [for] a sin
 offering, and the other [for] a burnt offering ; and the priest
 shall make an atonement for her before the LORD for the issue
 of her uncleanness.
 31 Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their un-
 cleanness ; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they
 32 defile my tabernacle that [is] among them. This [is] the
 law of him that hath an issue, and [of him] whose seed goeth
 33 from him, and is defiled therewith ; And of her that is sick
 of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and
 of the woman, and of him that lieth with her which is un-
 clean.

CHAP. XVI.

The great day of atonement.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the
 two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD,
 2 and died ; And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron
 thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy [place]
 within the veil before the mercy seat, which [is] upon the
 ark ; that he die not : for I will appear in the cloud upon the
 mercy seat ; or, *I will be approached in a cloud of incense ; for*
it was a bright flaming appearance that was on the mercy seat,
 3 *called the Glory of the Lord.* Thus shall Aaron come into the
 holy [place :] with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a
 ram for a burnt offering for himself and his house, that is, the
 4 whole Levitical family, v. 6. He shall put on the holy linen
 coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and
 shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre

- shall he be attired : these [are] holy garments ; therefore
 5 shall he wash his flesh in water, and [so] put them on.* And
 he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two
 kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt of-
 fering *for the whole congregation, beside that which he offered*
for himself, v. 3.
 6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which
 [is] for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for
 his house, *for all the priests and Levites.*
 7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before
 the LORD [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.
 8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats ; one lot for the
 LORD, *for his use and service, by way of sacrifice,* and the other
 9 lot for the scape goat. And Aaron shall bring the goat
 upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him [for] a sin of-
 10 fering *for all the people.* But the goat, on which the lot fell to
 be the scape goat, shall be presented alive before the LORD,
 to make an atonement with him, *in the manner mentioned, v.*
 21, 22. [and] to let him go for a scape goat into the wilder-
 ness.
 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering,
 which [is] for himself, and shall make an atonement for
 himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the
 12 sin offering which [is] for himself : And he shall take a cen-
 ser full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the
 LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and
 13 bring [it] within the veil :† And he shall put the incense
 upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense
 may cover the mercy seat that [is] upon the testimony, that he
 die not.
 14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, *which he was*
to go out again and fetch, for both his hands were full before, and
 sprinkle [it] with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward ;
 and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with
 15 his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the
 sin offering, that [is] for the people, and bring his blood
 within the veil,‡ and do with that blood as he did with the
 blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and
 16 before the mercy seat : And, *lest God should be provoked by*
the sins of the people to withdraw himself from among them, he
 shall make an atonement for the holy [place,] because of the

* It seems that the whole work, which was peculiar to this day, was performed by the high priest. The Jewish writers tell us, that he took some extraordinary care for some preceding days, to purify himself from all kinds of pollution, and that he sat up the night before, and was watched by inferior priests, that nothing of that kind might accidentally befall him.

† This was the first time of his entrance into the most holy place. We never entered there without incense, the cloud of which, rising between him and the Shekinah, prevented his prying too minutely into the divine appearance, or glory.

‡ This was the third time of his entrance.

- uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins, *the imperfections and miscarriages of their holy services, which would have hindered the efficacy of the high priest's mediation on their behalf, if God had not been reconciled to them :* and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness, *in the midst of a sinful people, who defile not only themselves, but God's sanctuary also,*
- 17 Ezekiel xxiii. 38, 39.* And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy [place,] until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and
- 18 for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out of the holy place unto the altar that [is] before the LORD, to the brazen altar in the court of the tabernacle, and make an atonement for it ; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put [it] upon the horns of the
- 19 altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.
- 20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy [place,] and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar,
- 21 he shall bring the live goat : And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, *that is, sins of all sorts, both of the priests and people, putting them upon the head of the goat, charging them, and the punishment due to them, on the goat, which, though only a ceremony, yet being done according to God's appointment, was available to this end :* and the priest shall send [him] away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, *to denote the removal of their sins far away :* And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited : and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.†
- 23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy [place,] and shall leave them
- 24 there : *the Jews say, never to be worn any more.* And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his golden garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make, *or rather, having made,* an atonement for himself, and for the people, *by the*
- 25 *foregoing sacrifices.* And the fat of the sin offering shall he

* Accordingly, in v. 20. it is called. A reconciliation for the sanctuary. In allusion to this, the apostle argues, *Heb. ix. 23.* that heaven itself would be polluted by the entrance of such sinful creatures as we, were it not for the blood of Christ, that better sacrifice, by which we are purified.

† Herein he was a type of Christ, on whom the Lord laid our iniquities, *Isa. liii. 6.* and who bore our sins in his own body on the tree, *1 Peter ii. 24.*

- 26 burn upon the altar. And he that let go the goat for the scape goat, *being polluted by touching the beast charged with the sins of all the people*, shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward *he shall come into the camp.*
- 27 And the bullock [for] the sin offering, and the goat [for] the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy [place,] shall [one] carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh,
- 28 and their dung. And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.
- 29 And [this] shall be a statute for ever unto you : [that] in the seventh month, on the tenth [day] of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, [whether it be] one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among
- 30 you : For on that day shall [the priest] make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, [that] ye may be clean from all your
- 31 sins before the LORD.* It [shall be] a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever.†
- 32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen
- 33 clothes, [even] the holy garments : And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and
- 34 for all the people of the congregation. And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year.‡ And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.||

REFLECTIONS.

THE apostle, *Heb. ix. 7—12*, hath so plainly traced an analogy between the institutions of this day, and the atonement of Christ, and his intercession founded on the efficacy of his sacrifice, that none can reasonably deny the former to have been a type of the latter. Let us learn then, to be thankful for the atonement and intercession of Jesus Christ; and consider the nature and meaning of it by the light of this important chapter :

* It is observable, that this was the universal atonement, and the only sacrifice that was offered for all the sins of the priests and the people, and for all the accidental errors in the service of the sanctuary, and that degree of pollution which even the most sacred things were exposed to in consequence of their being among a sinful people.

† Accordingly, the Jews always observed this day in the midst of their greatest depravity.

‡ This is expressed so frequently to show the great importance of it.

§ That this chapter may be better understood, compare it with the eighth and ninth chapters of the Hebrews.

He is our great high priest, who is perfectly pure and holy; *who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* He needed not to offer sacrifices for himself, but he offered one for all the people; not the blood of bulls and goats, which could not take away sin, but his own precious blood. *The Lord was pleased to lay on him the iniquities of us all.* He bore away our transgressions, as the scape goat did the sins of the people, never to be remembered any more. In all sin offerings, which were presented with a proper disposition of mind, the guilt of the offender was considered as transferred to the beast, and the beast was put to death in his stead. Thus *Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree.*

Let us be deeply sensible of the evil of our sins, confess them with humble, penitent hearts, while we lay our hands on the head of this great sacrifice. Let us adore the mercy of God in appointing and accepting it, and by faith lay hold on it; rejoicing in these tokens of pardon and acceptance in this new and living way. Especially should we rejoice, that Christ, *by his own blood, is entered within the veil, where he ever lives to make intercession for us.* Now we may come boldly to the throne of grace, to seek mercy, and grace to help in every time of need, seeing *Jesus Christ the Son of God, is passed into the heavens for us.* By the efficacy of his blood are those heavenly places sanctified for us, and our way into them is opened. Let us be daily looking to the Lord Jesus Christ, as *gone to appear in the presence of God for us, and as entered there with his own blood:* and may that blood be as efficacious to subdue the power of sin in our hearts, as it is to expiate our guilt in the presence of God! Amen.

CHAP. XVII.

God having instituted the great sacrifice, some directions are here given relating to the slaying of beasts, and what should be done with their blood.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
- 2 **A** Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them; This [is] the thing which the
- 3 **L**ORD hath commanded, saying, What man soever [there be] of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, *for sacrifice*, or that killeth [it] out of the camp,
- 4 **A**nd bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD, before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man, he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from

- among his people :* To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer, *or were used to offer, in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them [for] peace offerings unto the*
- 7 LORD. And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD, [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD.
- 8 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, *demons, or evil spirits,†* after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout
- 9 their generations. And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man [there be] of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering
- 10 or sacrifice of *peace offering,* And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD ; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.
- 11 And whatsoever man [there be] of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood *at his own table, which many idolaters did in a very superstitious manner ;* I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among
- 12 his people. For the life of the flesh [is] in the blood, *the life of all living creatures depends upon the blood, is preserved and nourished by it, and extinguished when that is gone ;* and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls : for it [is] the blood [that] maketh an atonement for the soul ; *I have set it apart for a better use, and therefore it*
- 13 *must not be eaten.* Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood, *as idolaters were used to do after they had sacrificed their beasts ; hoping thereby to have familiarity with their deities, and revelations from them.* And whatsoever man [there be] of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten ; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust, *lest other beasts should lick it up, or men should convert it to idolatrous*
- 14 *purposes.* For [it is] the life of all flesh ; the blood of it [is] for the life thereof : therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh : for the

* This was probably intended to prevent any idolatrous customs which they might have seen in Egypt or learned from their neighbours.

† The original word is *Gast* ; either they imagined that they appeared in that shape, or they were worshipped through that medium, especially in Egypt. Some think all the flesh for common food was to be killed before the tabernacle, to prevent their offering any of it or its blood to idols. If this be the sense, it could only relate to their condition in the wilderness, and would not be a statute for ever.

life of all flesh [is] the blood [thereof : whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

- 15 And every soul that *ignorantly* eateth that which died [of itself,] or that which was torn [with beasts, and was not sufficiently bled, whether it be] one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe [himself] in water, and be unclean until the even : then shall he be
16 clean. But if he wash [them] not, nor bathe his flesh ; then shall he bear his iniquity, *the punishment of his disobedience.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E hence learn, that *whether we eat, or drink, or what, ever we do, all should be done to the glory of God.* He required that the Israelites should pay some peculiar acknowledgment to him in their daily food ; offer him the blood, and perhaps kill the animals intended for food, at his tabernacle ; this was designed to show them that, *the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof ; the beasts of the forest are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.* May this teach us to glorify God in the use of his creatures : to sanctify them with the word and prayer. Let our acknowledgment of God's goodness at our meals be a solemn thing ; let the heart be impressed with reverence and gratitude to him, *who spreadeth our table and filleth our cup, and giveth us all things richly to enjoy.*

2. Let the regard shown to the blood, or life, of a beast, as an expiation, remind us of the blood of sprinkling, that precious blood of Christ, by which atonement was made for sin : in this ancient constitution there is a reference to this great sacrifice and propitiation. This should be thankfully remembered by us ; and while we rejoice in our freedom from these ordinances, let us pay a believing regard to that blood which *cleanses from all sin,* and by which we obtain eternal redemption.

3. Let us learn to be upon our guard against any violation of the divine laws, especially a presumptuous one. Sins of inadvertency are here taken notice of, as by them some degree of pollution was contracted, and forms of purification were appointed for them. Let us be very regular in observing all divine institutions ; keep close to divine precepts ; and especially be careful that we do not sin *with a high hand,* not wilfully violate the laws of the gospel, which are all reasonable, just, and good. Let it be our daily prayer, *Lord, keep thy servants from presumptuous sins !*

CHAP. XVIII.

In this chapter ceremonial precepts are particularly explained and enforced.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
- 2 the children of Israel, and say unto them, I [am] the
- 3 LORD your God, *who therefore have authority to command what I please, and whom you are bound absolutely to obey.*
- 4 After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do : and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do : neither shall ye walk
- 5 in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein : I [am] the LORD your
- 6 God. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments : which if a man do *sincerely*, he shall live in them, *shall have life and prosperity* : I [am] the LORD.
- 7 None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover [their] nakedness ; *that is, shall not contract marriage with such* : I [am] the LORD. The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover : she [is] thy mother ; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness ; *that is, thou shalt not marry thy own mother.* The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover ; *that is, thou shalt not marry thy mother in law, or step mother* : it
- 8 [is] thy father's nakedness. The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father *by another wife*, or daughter of thy mother *by another husband*, [whether she be] born at home, or born abroad, [even] their nakedness thou shalt not
- 9 uncover. The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, [even] their nakedness thou shalt not
- 10 uncover : for their's [is] thine own nakedness. The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she [is] thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.
- 11 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister ; she [is] thy father's near kinswoman. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister : she [is] thy
- 12 mother's near kinswoman. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife : she [is] thine aunt. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law : she [is] thy son's wife ; thou
- 13 shalt not uncover her nakedness. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife : it [is] thy brother's
- 14 nakedness. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness ; [for] they [are] her near kinswomen : it [is] wickedness.

- 18 Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, *one wife to another*, to vex [her,] to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life [time.]
- 19 Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness, *which was to be seven days. This was to be punished with death when wilfully done, (ch. xx. 18.) God having forbidden those crimes to which the Egyptians were addicted, now proceeds*
- 20 *to those that were most common among the Canaanites.* Moreover, thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her ; *which was punished with death, (ch. xx. 10.)* And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through [the fire] to Molech,* neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God, *not dishonour it by departing from God to serve such an idol, in such an abominable manner : I [am] the LORD.*
- 22 Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind : it [is]
- 23 abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith : neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto : it [is] confusion.
- 24 Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things : for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you :
- 25 And the land is defiled : therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, *I am now about to punish it for those iniquities ;* and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit [any] of these abominations ; [neither] any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among
- 27 you : (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which [were] before you, and the land is defiled ;)
- 28 That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it
- 29 spued out the nations that [were] before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit [them] shall be cut off from among their people.
- 30 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that [ye] commit not [any one] of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein : I [am] the LORD your God.

* This Molech was the same as Baal, see Jer. xix. 5. In the worship of this idol, children were sometimes burned to death ; sometimes they passed only between two fires, for a sign of consecration or purgation ; and it was reckoned a piece of witchcraft so preserve them from a violent death. This was spiritual whoredom, ch. xx. 5. and therefore here forbidden among the sorts of whoredom and incest.

CHAP. XIX.

A repetition of sundry laws, partly ceremonial, and partly moral.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
- 2 all the congregation of the children of Israel, *speak to the elders, and let them speak to the people,* and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, separated from all the aforementioned defilements, and entirely consecrated to my service; be sure in heart, and active in obeying all my commands: for I the LORD your
- 3 God [am] holy. Ye shall fear every man his mother, *(she is first mentioned because most apt to be despised,)* and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I [am] the LORD your God.
- 4 Turn ye not unto idols, neither to worship them, nor to look at them, nor make to yourselves molten gods: I, the self-existent and eternal Jehovah, [am] the LORD your God.
- 5 And if ye offer a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, ye shall offer it at your own will, *what you think proper, but in the way which God hath prescribed, and observing his directions.* It shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if aught remain until the third day, it shall
- 7 be burnt in the fire: And if it be eaten at all on the third day,
- 8 it [is] abominable; it shall not be accepted. Therefore [every one] that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
- 9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field; neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest, *what drops down by chance.*
- 10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather [every] grape of thy vineyard, *single grapes that do not grow in clusters;* thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I [am] the LORD your God, *who gave you this land, and require this charity, and that you be ready to pity and do good.*
- 11 Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another upon any occasion whatever, and particularly, not there-
- 12 by to defraud another. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God, *by rash, vain, unadvised, needless, or false oaths, or any other abuse of my name, by using it in common discourse, whereby it might come into contempt; for I [am] the LORD, I am JEHOVAH, and expect you to reverence my awful and venerable name.*
- 13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour by craft, neither rob [him] by violence: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning, *because he is poor,*
- 14 *and wants it for support.** Thou shalt not curse the deaf, who

* Plato ordered such to pay double, and Job esteemed it his honour that he had never broken this law.

cannot hear, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, to make them fall, but shalt fear thy God : I [am] the LORD, who see and hear what injury is done to these unhappy persons, though they do not; and I will reckon for them, and plead their cause.

- 15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment : thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty : [but] in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour ; you are not to regard the qualifications or conditions of men, but the merits of the cause. Thou shalt not go up and down [as] a talebearer among thy people, to pick up stories here and there, and carry them about the country, to thy neighbour's hurt ;^a neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour, nor do any thing against his life, particularly, not appear as a false accuser or witness in courts of justice ; I [am] the LORD.
- 17 Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart : thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, whatever scorn, wrath, or loss it may expose thee to ; therefore reprove him when he doeth wrong, and do not suffer sin upon him, be not accessory to his sin and ruin. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself : I [am] the LORD. This advice and command was given by our Lord himself, Matt. v. 43. and he tells us who is meant by our neighbour, Matt. xxiii. 39.
- 19 Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind : thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed : neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee. These things are mentioned, to teach them to abominate the mixtures forbidden in the foregoing chapter, and to deter them from the idolatry of those who used to propagate heterogeneous cattle in honour of their gods.
- 20 And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that [is] a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her, she shall be scourged ; (the Hebrew signifies, there shall be a scourging, probably of both of them ;) they shall not be put to death, because she was not free, for then the punishment was death. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, [even] a ram for a trespass offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he hath done : and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

^a This is a very vile, but too common practice. One evil tongue hurts three persons, say the Jew, the speaker, the hearer, and the person spoken of.

- 23 And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised, *as unclean* : three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you : it shall not be eaten of ; *in opposition to the custom of the heathen, who consecrated the fruit to their gods.* But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, *given to the priests as first fruits, (and part of them was given to the poor widows, fatherless, and strangers, Deut. xiv. 28, 29.)* to praise the LORD [withal,] *by whose goodness and power the trees bring forth fruit to perfection.* And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof abundantly, *as a reward of your obedience* : I [am] the LORD your God.
- 26 Ye shall not eat [any thing] with the blood : neither shall ye use enchantment, *whereby persons pretend to discover hidden things by the superstitious use of words and ceremonies, or by observation of the flight of birds, or other contingencies ;* nor observe times, *not count one day lucky, another unlucky, in which to begin any work.* Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard, *not shave off the hair, in token of excessive mourning, as the heathen did.* Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you, *as tokens of idolatry or superstition* : I [am] the LORD.
- 29 Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore, *as the gentiles frequently did, in token of honour to some of their idols ; all those things were practised by the heathen, and therefore wisely forbidden to the Israelites ;* lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.
- 30 Ye shall keep my sabbaths *free from ceremonial pollutions, and reverence my sanctuary, attend there with serious, humble dispositions of mind* ; I [am] the LORD, *who inhabit it, and expect all my worshippers to be devout and holy.* Regard not them that *pretend to have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, those who pretend to tell fortunes, or foretell future events,* to be defiled by them : I [am] the LORD your God ; *nothing can happen without me, and none shall be applied to but me.*
- 32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, *or elder, persons eminent for wisdom, learning, and piety,* and fear thy God ; I [am] the LORD, *who require this at thy hand.**
- 33 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex or oppress him. [But] the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou

* Religion is a friend to good manners ; the fear of God teaches all social duty ; and *Jews*, an heathen, says, the neglect of this reverence to age and wisdom is a great wickedness, and punishable with death.

shalt love him as thyself ; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt : I [am] the LORD your God.

- 35 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard,
 36 in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have : I [am] the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.
 37 Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them : I [am] the LORD, *your sovereign, who have a right to your obedience, and am able to make you happy, and richly reward your constancy and fidelity.*

REFLECTION.

WE learn hence to be thankful that we are delivered from the burden of ceremonial precepts, and to be more careful in practising the moral ones. Let us ever remember what a great stress is laid upon them in the New Testament ; and earnestly pray, that God would write them upon our hearts, and make us willing and obedient, to his glory, and our everlasting joy.

CHAP. XX.

Of giving seed to Molech ; of wizards ; of cursing parents, &c.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Again, thou
 2 shalt say to the children of Israel, Whosoever [he be] of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth [any] of his seed unto Molech, (*see ch. xviii. 21.*) he shall surely be put to death : the people of the land shall stone him with stones. And I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people ; because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to
 4 defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not : Then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off *by some awful judgment*, and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.
 6 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, (*see ch. xix. 31.*) I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.
 7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy : for I [am]
 8 the LORD your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them : I [am] the LORD which sanctify you, *separate you*

from the rest of the world, and give you my Spirit and grace to make you holy.

- 9 For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death : he hath cursed his father or his mother ; his blood [shall be] upon him.
- 10 And the man that committeth adultery with [another] man's wife, [even he] that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.
- 11 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness : both of them shall surely be put
- 12 to death ; their blood [shall be] upon them. And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death : they have wrought confusion ; their blood [shall be] upon them.
- 13 If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination : they shall surely be put to death ; their blood [shall be] upon them.
- 14 And if a man take a wife and her mother, it [is] wickedness : they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they ; that there be no wickedness among you.
- 15 And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to
- 16 death : and ye shall slay the beast. And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman and the beast : they shall surely be put to death ; their blood [shall be] upon them.
- 17 And if a man shall take his sister, his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness ; it [is] a wicked thing : and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people : he hath uncovered his sister's
- 18 nakedness ; he shall bear his iniquity. And if a man shall lie with a woman having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness ; he hath discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood : and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.
- 19 And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister : for he uncovereth his near
- 20 kin : they shall bear their iniquity. And if a man shall lie with his uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness : they shall bear their sin ; they shall die childless.
- 21 And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it [is] an unclean thing : he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness ; they shall be childless.
- 22 Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them : that the land, whither I bring you to
- 23 dwell therein, spue you not out. And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you : for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred
- 24 them. But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land,

- and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey : I [am] the LORD your God, which
- 25 have separated you from [other] people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean : and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated
- 26 from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto me : for I the LORD [am] holy, and have severed you from [other] people, that ye should be mine.
- 27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death : they shall stone them with stones : their blood [shall be] upon them.
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CHAP. XXI.

Of the priests' mourning, and marriages.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, *to the inferior priests*, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people, *by attending a funeral, or assisting at it : (hereby people contracted a defilement of seven days, Num. xix. 14, 16.)*
- 2 But for his kin, that is near unto him, [that is,] for his mother; and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and
- 3 for his brother, And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband ; for her may he be defiled ;
- 4 *it is his duty to bury and mourn for such near kindred.* [But] he shall not defile himself, [being] a chief man among his people, *since he is one in a more eminent station than any of the people, to profane himself, make himself as a common person*
- 5 *and unclean, and so unfit to execute his office.* They shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.
- 6 They shall be holy unto their God, *always ready for his service ;* and not profane the name of their God, *not disparage his service by making it give way to such slight occasions :* for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, [and] the bread of their God, they do offer : therefore they shall be holy.
- 7 They shall not take a wife [that is] a whore, or profane ; neither shall they take a woman put away from her husband :
- 8 for he [is] holy unto his God. Thou shalt sanctify him therefore : for he offereth the bread of thy God : he shall be holy unto thee : for I the LORD, which sanctify you [am] holy.
- 9 And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father, *exposes his person and office to contempt :* she shall be burnt with fire.

- 10 And [he that is] the high priest among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor rend his clothes, *shall not put off his mitre, to put on a mourning habit, but continue in the exercise of his office ;*
- 11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself
- 12 for his father, or for his mother ; Neither shall he go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God ; for the crown of the anointing oil of his God [is] upon him : I [am] the LORD.
- 13 14 And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, [or] an harlot, these shall he not take : but he shall take a virgin of his own people, *of*
- 15 *some of the tribes of Israel, (Ezek. xliv. 22.) to wife. Neither shall he profane his seed among his people, shall not render his sons unfit for the priestly office, by marrying any here forbidden : for I the LORD do sanctify him.*
- 16 17 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever [he be] of thy seed in their generations that hath [any] blemish, let him not approach to
- 18 offer the bread of his God.* For whatsoever man [he be] that hath a blemish, he shall not approach : a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous, Or a man that is broken footed, or broken handed, Or
- 20 crook backed, or a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye,
- 21 or be scurvy, or scabbed, or hath his stones broken ; No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire : he hath a blemish ; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread
- 22 of his God. He shall eat the bread of his God, [both] of the most holy, and of the holy : *involuntary weaknesses debar not*
- 23 *from benefit by ordinances.* Only he shall not go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish ; that he profane not my sanctuaries : for I the LORD
- 24 do sanctify them. And Moses told [it] unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.

* This may teach all christians, especially ministers, what purity and perfection of heart and life they should labour after ; and that notorious blemishes, either in the mind or conversation, render a man unfit for the ministerial office.

CHAP. XXII.

When the priests are to abstain from holy things.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
- 2 Aaron and to his sons, that they separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, *when they are under any defilement*, and that they profane not my holy name [in those things] which they hallow unto me : I [am] the
- 3 LORD. Say unto them, Whosoever [he be] of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, *to eat of, or touch the sacrifices*, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence : I [am] the LORD.
- 4 What man soever of the seed of Aaron [is] a leper, or hath a running issue ; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing [that is] unclean
- 5 [by] the dead, or a man whose seed goeth from him ; Or whosoever toucheth any creeping thing *that is dead*, whereby he may be made unclean, or a man of whom he may take
- 6 uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath ; The soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with
- 7 water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things ; because it [is] his food.
- 8 That which dieth of itself, or is torn [with beasts,] he shall
- 9 not eat to defile himself therewith : I [am] the LORD. They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it : I the LORD do sanctify them.
- 10 There shall no stranger eat [of] the holy thing : a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat [of]
- 11 the holy thing. But if the priest buy [any] soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house :
- 12 they shall eat of his meat. If the priest's daughter also be [married] unto a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of
- 13 the holy things. But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat : but there shall no stranger eat thereof.
- 14 And if a man eat [of] the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth [part] thereof unto it, and shall give [it] unto the priest with the holy thing, *that is, with the value of it*.
- 15 And they, *whether priests or people*, shall not profane the holy things of the children of Israel, which they offer unto the
- 16 LORD ; Or suffer them to bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things ; *that is, the priests shall not suffer the people to incur any guilt in these respects* : for I the LORD do sanctify them.

- 17 18 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever [he be] of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, *proselytes, or converted gentiles*, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the
- 19 LORD for a burnt offering : [Ye shall offer] at your own will, *what and when you please*, a male without blemish, of the
- 20 beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats. [But] whatsoever hath a blemish, [that] shall ye not offer : for it shall not be accept-
- 21 able for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish [his] vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted ; there shall be no blemish therein. Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by
- 23 fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD. Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer [for] a freewill offering ; but
- 24 for a vow it shall not be accepted. Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut ; neither shall ye make [any offering thereof] in your
- 25 land. Neither from a stranger's hand shall ye offer the bread of your God of any of these ; because their corruption [is] in them, *they are vicious and unlawful sacrifices*, [and] blemishes [be] in them : they shall not be accepted for you.
- 26 27 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam ; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire
- 28 unto the LORD. And [whether it be] cow or ewe, ye shall not kill it and her young both in one day.
- 29 And when ye will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the
- 30 LORD, offer [it] at your own will. On the same day it shall be eaten up ; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow : I [am] the LORD.
- 31 Therefore shall ye keep my commandments, and do them :
- 32 I [am] the LORD. Neither shall ye profane my holy name ; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel : I
- 33 [am] the LORD which hallow you, That brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God : I [am] the LORD.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of several feasts, and the day of atonement. Some account has been given of these in various places before, but here they are all related together.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
 2 the children of Israel, and say unto them, [concerning]
 the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim [to be] holy
 convocations, *times to meet together for my worship*, [even]
 these [are] my feasts.*
- 3 Six days shall work be done : but the seventh day [is] the
 sabbath of rest, an holy convocation ; ye shall do no work
 [therein :] it [is] the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwell-
 ings.
- 4 These [are] the feasts of the LORD, [even] holy convoca-
 5 tions, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the four-
 teenth [day] of the first month at even [is] the LORD's pass-
 over.
- 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month [is] the feast
 of unleavened bread unto the LORD : seven days ye must
 7 eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy
 8 convocation : ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye
 shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven
 days : in the seventh day [is] an holy convocation : ye shall
 do no servile work [therein.†]
- 9 10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the
 children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come
 into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the har-
 vest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf, *or handful*, of the
 11 first fruits of your harvest unto the priest : ‡ And he shall
 wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you, *that*
God may accept of you, and bless you in the rest of your har-
vest : on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave
 12 it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an
 he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt
 13 offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof
 [shall be] two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an
 offering made by fire unto the LORD [for] a sweet savour :
 and the drink offering thereof [shall be] of wine, the fourth
 14 [part] of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched

* There were many feasts among their neighbours, kept in honour of their gods ; therefore these were established. The people came to these feasts, not merely to attend sacrifices, but to do public honour to God ; to show reverence for his administration ; to promote brotherly love ; keep up acquaintance with each other, and to prevent any from running into idolatry.

† Dressing food and journeying were allowed on other days of rest, but were forbidden on the sabbath.

‡ They were to eat none of their new corn till some part of it had been offered to God.

- corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God : [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.
- 15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering ; seven sabbaths shall be complete : Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days ;* and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.
- 17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals : they shall be of fine flour ; they shall be baked with leaven ; [they are] the first fruits of the wheat harvest unto the LORD. And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams : they shall be [for] a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, [even] an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD. Then ye shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first fruits [for] a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs : they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. And ye shall proclaim on the selfsame day, [that] it may be an holy convocation unto you : ye shall do no servile work [therein : it shall be] a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.†
- 22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest : thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger : I [am] the LORD your God.
- 23 24 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first [day] of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.‡ Ye shall do no servile work [therein ;] but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
- 26 27 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Also on the tenth [day] of this seventh month [there shall be] a day of

* Hence called Pentecost, *Acts* ii. 1. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 8. or, the Feast of Weeks, *Deut.* xvi. 10. It was about the middle of May.

† This feast was only observed one day ; probably because it was a busy time, at the beginning of their wheat harvest. It was kept in remembrance of their coming out of Egypt, and the giving of the law at this season. Dedicating their first fruits to God, was a natural acknowledgment of his universal providence ; the heathen had such a custom among them. It was wisely appointed, that at this feast the Spirit should be poured out on the apostles, because multitudes of Jews were then at Jerusalem ; the days were at the longest ; the roads best, and great numbers attended beside the men. The promulgation of the gospel answered to that of the law ; and as the first fruits were then presented, so the first fruits of the christian church were then gathered in and presented to God.

‡ This was the first day of their new civil year, and it was introduced with a peculiar solemnity, called the Feast of Trumpets.

- atonement : (*ch. xvi. 30. Numb. xxix. 7.*) it shall be an holy convocation unto you ; and ye shall afflict your souls *with fasting, and bitter repentance, for all your sins, but especially national sins*, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.
- 28 And ye shall do no work in that same day : for it [is] a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God. For whatsoever soul [it be] that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul [it be] that doeth any work in that same day, *though it escape the eye and judgment of man, it shall not escape my judgment*, for the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work : [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It [shall be] unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls : in the ninth [day] of the month at even, *beginning to do it then, and ending on the tenth day at even, v. 27.* from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.
- 34 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [shall be] the feast of tabernacles [for] seven days unto the LORD.* On the first day [shall be] an holy convocation : ye shall do no servile work [therein.] Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD ; on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you ; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD : it [is] a solemn assembly ; [and] ye shall do no servile work [therein.†] These [are] the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim [to be] holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day : Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land,‡ ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days : on the first day [shall be] a sabbath, and on the eighth day [shall be] a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of

* At this feast they were to make booths, or arbours ; in remembrance of God's protection of them in the wilderness, when they dwelt in booths or tabernacles, v. 43. and to show their thankfulness for the fruits now reaped, *Deut. xvi. 13, 14.*

† On this day they removed out of the booths into their houses again, and so it denoted their settlement in the land of Canaan, after their forty years' abode in the wilderness. In the latter years of the Jewish state there were some circumstances added, which were not of divine institution ; particularly, a custom of pouring water, drawn from the pool of Siloam, on the altar ; some say, as an acknowledgment of God's goodness in giving them rain ; others say, of their drinking water in the wilderness : but rather, in token of their desire and expectation of the effusion or pouring out of the Spirit in the days of the Messiah. *On that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John vii. 37.*

‡ Not corn, which was gathered long before, but of vines, olives, &c. hence called the Feast of Ingathering, *Exod. xxiii. 16.*

- goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook ; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days, *in remembrance of former deliverances, (v. 43.) for your present blessings, (Deut. xvi. 15.)*
- 41 *and in expectation of future good things.* And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. [It shall be] a statute for ever in your generations : ye shall celebrate it
- 42 in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days ;*
- 43 all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths : That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of
- 44 Egypt : I [am] the LORD your God. And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **F**ROM hence we learn, that it is our duty to devote a considerable part of our time to God's service ; he is the author of our life, and of all our comforts ; and therefore should be served with the best. Let us not grudge him that time which should be appropriated to his worship ; but redeem some part of every day for religious purposes. We are under peculiar obligations to keep the sabbath holy, because no other time is made sacred under the gospel. The Jews observed it from evening till evening, that is, the whole day ; and it is reasonable that we should devote the whole of it to God. Let us remember, as it is observed, *v. 30. that whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.* God observes if we do any unnecessary work, and, though it may not be taken notice of by human laws, he will call us to an account for it. *Ye shall keep the sabbath in all your dwellings ;* not only in God's house, but also in your own. This is a most important law ; public ordinances do little good, without the fear and worship of the Lord in our own dwellings.

2. Let us commemorate the greater and more important mercies which God hath granted to us. The Israelites had deliverance from Egypt, but we have deliverance from sin and Satan. They had the passover, but *Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us ; therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* They had their pentecost ; let us remember the effusion of the Spirit. They had their feast of tabernacles ; let us acknowledge the goodness of God to us, while passing through this world ; in feeding and clothing us, guiding us by his providence, and giving us views of the heavenly Canaan. They had their day of atonement ; let us remember the great

* These in Jerusalem were made on the tops of houses, in court yards, in gardens, in the streets, &c.

atonement, the sacrifice of Christ, to which the sacrifices under the law had regard, and were designed to typify.

3. Let us honour the Lord with our substance, as we desire his blessing. They offered their first fruits to God; let us acknowledge his goodness and mercy in the blessings of harvest, and our plentiful provisions; nor let us forget *to do good and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* It was attended with great expense to come to these feasts at Jerusalem, where lodgings and provisions were scarce and dear, as a considerable part of their cattle were taken with them to be used for sacrifices. Since we are delivered from all these expensive rites, let us grudge nothing that we can do for God, his cause, or people, and for his ministers too. This is the way to obtain his blessing, which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it.

CHAP. XXIV.

In this chapter we have directions about the lamps and the shew bread for the sanctuary: and the conviction and execution of a blasphemer, &c.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command
- 2 the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee, *at the public charge, pure oil olive beaten, run from the olive, just bruised, and not squeezed or pressed in a mill, for the light, to*
- 3 *cause the lamps to burn continually, every night.* Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron and his family, *all the priests,* order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually:
- 4 [it shall be] a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick, *the candlestick of pure gold,* before the LORD continually.*
- 5 And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof, *answerable to the number of the twelve tribes represented by them:* two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD, *on the table covered with pure gold.*
- 7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon [each] row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, [even] an offering
- 8 made by fire unto the LORD.† Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *it shall be renewed every sabbath by the priests who minister in their courses,* [being taken] from the children of Israel, *at the common expense, by*

* Some think the lamps burned all day, as well as all night, because there were no windows in the tabernacle.

† when the bread was eaten this was to be burned, probably on the altar of incense.

- an everlasting covenant between God and them, in which they engaged to observe these laws, (1 Chron. ix. 32.) And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place, after it hath stood a week upon the table before the Lord : for it [is] most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.*
- 10 And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father [was] an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel, came with them out of Egypt : and this son of the Israelitish [woman] and a man of Israel strove together in the camp ; we are not told the ground of their quarrel, but the contention grew warm ;
- 11 And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name [of the LORD,] and cursed, uttered some reproachful speeches in his fury against God, (v. 15, 16.) And they brought him unto Moses : (and his mother's name [was] Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan ;)
- 12 And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be showed them ; there being then no particular law against blasphemy, Moses sought direction from God. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed, without the camp, as an unclean thing ; and let all that heard [him] lay their hands upon his head, to mark out the man, and give evidence against him ; to denote that having witnessed nothing but the truth, they were free from his blood, which therefore must be on his own head ; and to imply that he was to be a sacrifice to the justice of God ; and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Henceforth this shall be the law in all such cases,
- 13 whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, [and] all the congregation shall certainly stone him : as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name [of the LORD,] shall be put to death.†
- 17 And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.
- 18 And he that killeth a beast shall make it good ; beast for beast. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour ; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him ; Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth : as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him [again.] And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it : and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country : for I [am] the LORD your God. See Exodus xxi.

* God being King of the Jews, the tabernacle was his palace, the priests his servants ; the lamps were to light his palace, the incense to perfume it ; the sacrifices and shew bread were the provisions of his house and table, and the priests, as God's household and servants, were to partake of what came from his table.

† The stranger was not obliged to worship God in their way ; in this he was left to his own choice ; but if he blasphemed the God of Israel, he was to be put to death.

- 23 And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the Lord commanded Moses.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **G**REAT honour is done to christian ministers, when they are called to prepare light and food for God's people. The priests were appointed to serve in God's temple. The christian ministry is an excellent and important office, designed to enlighten men's minds, and feed them with the word of God. In order to this, they should shine with knowledge and burn with zeal ; they should be the light of God's sanctuary ; illuminate the mind, warm the heart, and endeavour to turn men from darkness to light. They are stewards of God's house ; should provide bread for his people, and should take care to feed them with pure wheat, not with chaff : speaking the word of God faithfully ; *warning every man, and proving themselves to be workmen that need not to be ashamed.*

2. Let us learn to act with caution in every important affair, and earnestly desire to know the mind of God in it : thus Moses did. We have no warrant to expect extraordinary revelation, have no oracle to consult, but the law and the testimony. Let us then attend to the voice of Providence, and compare it with his word. It is especially the duty of judges and magistrates to deliberate in the affairs of blood, and observe what the law of God requires, and what will be for the welfare of society. We have great encouragement to *acknowledge God in all our ways*, and to hope that *he will direct our paths.* But the principal use of this passage of scripture is,

3. That we learn to treat the name of God and religion with the greatest reverence. Profane swearing, and taking the name of God in vain, are most scandalous abominations, such as should grieve every pious heart. Those bold transgressors we should courageously reprove, and endeavour to bring them to that punishment which our laws have appointed ; and not hear the sacred name of God blasphemed with silence. Let us guard against every thing that borders on this enormous crime. In order to avoid it, let us guard against pride and passion. It is not a sufficient excuse for swearing or cursing, that it was done in a passion, or to say, 'I was provoked.' Passion leads men to forget religion and reason too ; but God abhors, and will punish such transgressors. Let us never allow ourselves to jest with the word or worship of God, or any thing serious and sacred. It is the light, irreverent use of his sacred name, that leads men into a neglect and contempt of him. It is trifling with those solemn

words, *salvation and damnation*, that makes men neglect the former, and run headlong into the latter. These sins of the tongue, threaten the ruin of our country. *Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory, Isa. iii. 8.* Let us resolve to *take heed unto our ways, that we sin not with our tongues*: for as the apostle expresseth it, *James i. 26. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain.*

CHAP. XXV. 1—34.

Of the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, in the
 2 plain about it, where Israel still encamped, saying, Speak
 unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye
 come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep
 a sabbath unto the LORD; not the first year, but probably the
 3 seventh year after their settling in it. Six years thou shalt sow
 thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and
 4 gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be
 a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou
 shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard, not do any
 5 work of husbandry. That which groweth of its own accord
 of thy harvest thou shalt not reap for thy own private use, but
 in common with others, neither gather the grapes of thy vine
 undressed, but share them in common with thy neighbours: [for]
 6 it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land,
 the fruits of this sabbatical year, shall be meat for you; for
 thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired
 7 servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And
 for thy cattle, and for the beast that [are] in thy land, shall the
 increase thereof be meat.*
 8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee,
 seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths
 9 of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt
 thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound,† on the tenth
 [day] of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye
 make the trumpet sound throughout all your land, that is, the

* It was a proof of the extraordinary fruitfulness of the land, that it should be sufficient to lie fallow once in seven years; whereas prudence would certainly have dictated that different parts should lie fallow in different years. The appointment, that the whole should lie unfilled every seventh year, seems also to have been intended as an exercise of their faith, and a constant pledge of the divine care.

† It was probably called the jubilee, because it was introduced by the sound of a trumpet, and other expressions of joy.

- 10 *jubilee shall begin from the day of atonement. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, not the forty ninth, (as some learned men think,) but precisely the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout [all] the land unto all the inhabitants thereof, Is-*
raelites, chiefly servants and the poor, who were now acquitted from all their debts, and restored to their possessions ; it shall be a jubilee unto you ; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his fam-
 11 *ily.* A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you : ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor*
 12 *gather [the grapes] in it of the vine undressed. For it [is] the jubilee ; it shall be holy unto you, dedicated to God, and to the exercise of holy joy and thankfulness : ye shall eat the in-*
crease thereof out of the field, that is, what it produces of itself.
 13 *In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.*
 14 *And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbour, or buyest [aught] of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one an-*
 15 *other, neither by selling too dear, nor buying too cheap : Ac-*
ording to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, [and] according unto the number of
 16 *years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee : According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it : for [according] to the number [of the years] of the*
 17 *fruits doth he sell unto thee. Ye shall not therefore oppress one another ; but thou shalt fear thy God ; for I [am] the LORD your God.*
 18 *Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judg-*
 19 *ments, and do them ; and ye shall dwell in the land in*
 20 *safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat*
your fill, and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say,
 21 *What shall we eat the seventh year ? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase : Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth*
 22 *fruit for three years.† And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat [yet] of old fruit until the ninth year ; until her fruits come in ye shall eat [of] the old [store.]*

* This was designed to keep the tribes distinct : to preserve their genealogies clear, that the Messiah might be known ; to prevent the ill consequences of avarice and prodigality ; that families might not be impoverished by losing their estates ; and to keep them on a nearer equality with one another.

† Enough to suffice for the remainder of the sixth year, the whole of the seventh, and the beginning of the eighth, till the harvest of that year should come : this might be called three years, as the time which Christ lay in his grave is called three days. It was a standing miracle ; for in the course of things the smallest crop might be expected in the last year of tillage ; and it is a strong proof that Moses knew his law to be divine, or he would not have presumed to make a promise, which must in all probability have brought a disgrace upon the whole system, before the people had been settled seven years in the land.

- 23 The land shall not be sold forever : for the land [is mine ;]
 24 for ye [are] strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the
 land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the
 land, *suffer it to be redeemed at the year of jubilee.*
- 25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away [some]
 of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it,
 26 then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if a
 man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem
 27 it ; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, *from*
the time of the sale to the jubilee, and restore the overplus unto
 the man to whom he sold it ; that he may return unto his
 28 possession. But if he be not able to restore [it] to him, then
 that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath
 bought it until the year of jubilee : and in the jubilee it shall
 go out *of the buyer's hand without any redemption money*, and
 he shall return unto his possession.
- 29 And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then
 he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold ; [with-
 30 in] a full year may he redeem it. And if it be not redeemed
 within the space of a full year, then the house that [is] in the
 walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it
 throughout his generations : it shall not go out in the jubi-
 31 lee. But the houses of the villages, *the farm houses*, which
 have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields
 of the country : they may be redeemed, and they shall go
 out in the jubilee.
- 32 Notwithstanding the cities of the Levites, [and] the houses
 of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at
 33 any time. And if a man purchase of the Levites, then the
 house that was sold, and the city of his possession, shall go
 out in [the year of] jubilee : for the houses of the cities of
 the Levites [are] their possession among the children of Is-
 34 rael. But the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be
 sold ; for it [is] their perpetual possession.

REFLECTIONS.

1. **L**ET us be thankful for the joyful sound of the gos-
 pel. Jewish writers inform us, that when the jubilee
 was proclaimed by the sound of trumpets, there was a solemn
 cavalcade, especially of servants and those who had recovered
 their inheritance, crowned with flowers, &c. and this being the
 most joyful sound that ever was heard in ordinary among the
 Jews, it is used for the gospel, *Psa.* lxxxix. 15. and *Luke* iv. 19.
 which intimates to us, that the gospel provides for the remission
 of debts, redemption from servitude, and restoration to forfeited
 inheritances. The beginning of this year was fixed to the day

of atonement ; which has a beautiful analogy to the connection there is between those great gospel privileges typified by it, and the atonement of Christ, as the foundation of our receiving them. Thanks be to God, that we hear this joyful sound, that the acceptable year of the Lord is preached to us ! *Blessed are the people that know this joyful sound ; that believe these glad tidings ; that joyfully embrace the gospel, and obey it from their heart : they shall be blessed in their present privileges ; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance ; enjoy God's favour and presence in this world, and then be removed to another and better : to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.*

2. Let us live up to the dignity of God's Israel. Once we were slaves, but now we are free ; once we had forfeited all by sin, but now our inheritance is restored, and our debts are forgiven. Christ hath made us free, and given us the inheritance of children ; and, *if children, then are we heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* Being thus made free, let us not become the servants of sin any more ; let us not serve the world and the flesh again. Having been forgiven much, let us love much ; and especially learn to forgive others, *even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.* Let us live like God's children, and as the heirs of an eternal inheritance : ever remembering, *that we are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish ; and therefore, glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are his.*

CHAP. XXV. 35, to the end.

Of compassion to servants and the poor.

- 35 **A**ND if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee ; then thou shalt relieve him : [yea, though he be] a stranger, a proselyte, or a sojourner ; that he
 36 may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase, any consideration or advantage for the loan of any thing : but
 37 fear thy God ; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy
 38 victuals for increase. I [am] the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, [and] to be your God.
 39 And if thy brother [that dwelleth] by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee ; thou shalt not compel him to serve as
 40 a bond servant : [But] as an hired servant, [and] as a sojourner, to be used kindly, and as a brother, (v. 43, 46.) he

- shall be with thee, [and] shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee : And [then] shall he depart from thee, [both] he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they [are] my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, *members of my church, as well as yourselves, and therefore not to be treated like slaves :* they shall not be sold as bondmen ; (*Heb. with the sale of a bondman.*) Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour ; but shalt fear thy God.
- Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have [shall be] of the heathen that are round about you ; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that [are] with you, which they begat in your land : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit [them for] a possession ; they shall be your bondmen for ever : but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.
- And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother [that dwelleth] by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger [or] sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family : After that he is sold he may be redeemed again ; one of his brethren may redeem him : Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or [any] that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him, or if he be able, he may redeem himself. And he shall reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him unto the year of jubilee : and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years, according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him : *allowance shall be made for the time wherein he has served, proportionably to that which is given to an hired servant for so long service.*
- If [there be] yet many years [behind,] according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption out of the money that he was bought for. And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubilee, then he shall count with him, [and] according unto his years shall he give him again the price of his redemption. [And] as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him : [and the other] shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight. And if he be not redeemed in these [years,] then he shall go out in the year of jubilee, [both] he, and his children with him. For unto me the children of Israel [are] servants ; they [are] my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt : I [am] the Lord your God.

REFLECTION.

FROM this part of the chapter we may learn tenderness and humanity to our servants ; not requiring more work than their health and strength will bear ; not making their lives a burden ; but so ordering our affairs and commands, that their work may be pleasant, and cheerfully performed. We should provide for them the things that are convenient ; give them sufficient wages, food, rest, liberty ; and, above all, taking care of their best interests, remembering they are our brethren, and have souls to be saved. We should therefore give them time to serve God, and worship him ; furnish them with good books, and exhort them to mind *the one thing needful* ; ever remembering there is a Master in heaven, to whom both they and we are accountable.

CHAP. XXVI.

This chapter principally consists of promises to Israel, if obedient, and threatenings, if disobedient ; except the two first verses, which are a repetition of some important precepts that were delivered before.

- 1 **Y**E shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, or pillar, neither shall ye set up [any] image of stone, or figured stone, in your land, to bow down unto it : for I [am] the LORD your God ; as if he
- 2 had said, be sure to remember this. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary : I [am] the LORD.*
- 3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments,
- 4 and do them : Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field
- 5 shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time : and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely ; you shall have such a plentiful harvest, that before you can have threshed out your corn the vintage shall come ; and such a rich vintage, that before that be ended it shall be time to
- 6 sow your seed. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make [you] afraid : and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land ; ye shall have no sedition, no robbers, no wild beasts,
- 7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred,

* This is the great principle and support both of natural and revealed religion.

- and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight : and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword, *they may invade you, but shall be disappointed ; and a very few shall chase you and put to flight great multitudes.* For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new ; *ye shall have many inhabitants, and enough for them all ; and shall bring out the old corn for want of room to put in the new, and give the old to the poor and needy.* And I will set my tabernacle among you : and my soul shall not abhor you ; *I will cause my grace and favour, my word and worship, to abide continually among you.* And I will walk among you, and will be your God, *to protect, conduct, instruct, and comfort you,* and ye shall be my *peculiar* people, *whom I will delight to bless and honour.* I [am] the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen ; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright ; *have brought you into a state of liberty and security, am able to fulfil all my promises, and therefore have a right to expect your trust and obedience.*
- 14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these
 15 commandments ; And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my
 16 commandments, [but] that ye break my covenant : I also will do this unto you : I will even appoint over you terror, *perpetual hurry and horror of spirit, the worst disease imaginable,* consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart, *make you look thin and ghastly :* and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it, *they shall break in upon you, and carry off your provisions ; while you have neither strength to resist them, nor to labour for more.* And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies : they that hate you shall reign over you ; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.
- 18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven, *that is, many times more* for your sins.
 19 And I will break the pride of your power, *your exceeding great strength, in which you pride yourselves ;* and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass ; *destroy both*
 20 *your force and the fruitfulness of your ground :* And your strength shall be spent in vain : for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their
 21 fruits. And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me ; I will bring seven times more plagues upon
 22 you according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number ; and your [high]

- ways shall be desolate, *there shall be no people to walk in them,*
 23 *or it shall be dangerous to go there.* And if ye will not be re-
 formed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto
 24 me ; Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will pun-
 25 ish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a
 sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of [my] cove-
 nant, *my quarrel against you for breaking my covenant ;* and
 when ye are gathered together within your cities, *or strong*
holds, which ye thought impregnable, I will send the pestilence
 among you : and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the
 26 enemy. [And] when I have broken the staff of your bread,
deprived you of that which is the support of life, ten women
 shall bake your bread in one oven, *an oven which used to*
be filled for one family shall serve ten, and they shall deliver
 [you] your bread again by weight : and ye shall eat, and not
 27 be satisfied. And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me,
 28 but walk contrary unto me ; Then I will walk contrary unto
 you also in fury ; *I will act like a man that meets an enemy*
in fury and in battle ; and I, even I, will chastise you seven
 29 times for your sins. And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons,
 and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.*
 30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your
 images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your
 31 idols, and my soul shall abhor you.† And I will make your
 cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries, *your synagogues, or*
the tabernacle, the temple, and the several buildings about them,
 unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet
 32 odours, *will not accept your services,* And I will bring the
 land into desolation : and your enemies which dwell therein
 shall be astonished at it, *at the calamities that befall you ; so*
grievous, so various, and so uncommon shall they be.
 33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw
 out a sword after you : and your land shall be desolate, and
 34 your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths,
 as long as it lieth desolate, and ye [be] in your enemies'
 land ; [even] then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths,
those sabbatical years of rest from tillage, which you, through
 35 *covetousness, oftentimes would not give it.* As long as it lieth
 desolate it shall rest ; ‡ because it did not rest in your sab-
 baths, when ye dwelt upon it.
 36 And upon them that are left [alive] of you I will send a
 faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies ; and
 the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them ; and they shall

* This was fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and by the Romans.

† This is the most terrible threatening of all the rest ; for when God abhors a people, the way is open to all evil.

‡ Which was seventy years during their captivity, and was a just punishment for their neglect of the sabbath and the sabbatical year.

- flee, as fleeing from a sword ; and they shall fall when none
 37 pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were
 before a sword, when none pursueth : and ye shall have no
 38 power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish
 among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat
 39 you up.* And they that are left of you shall pine away in
 their iniquity in your enemies' lands, *through grief, hunger,*
and oppression ; and also in the iniquities of their fathers
 shall they pine away with them, *if they walk in their fathers'*
steps.
 40 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their
 fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me,
 41 and that also they have walked contrary unto me ; And [that]
 I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them
 into the land of their enemies, *and that all those things shall*
have come upon them by my just judgment, and not by chance ;
 if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, *to justify God*
and condemn themselves, and they then accept of the punish-
 ment of their iniquity, *patiently and humbly submit to their*
 42 *correction* : Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob,
 and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with
 Abraham, *the most ancient of all*, will I remember ; and I
 43 will remember the land, *which seemed to be forgotten.* The
 land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths,
 while she lieth desolate without them : and they shall accept
 of the punishment of their iniquity : because, even because
 they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred
 44 my statutes. And yet for all that, when they be in the land
 of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I
 abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my cove-
 45 nant with them : for I [am] the LORD their God. But I
 will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors,
 whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight
 of the heathen, that I might be their God : I [am] the
 LORD.†
 46 These [are] the statutes, and judgments, and laws, which
 the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in
 mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

* This was the case with the ten tribes.

† From these last verses we may observe, that such a reformation as there is at present among the Jews from idolatry, would have restored them to favour, according to the Mosaic covenant : but they are still under national guilt, as having crucified Christ. Yet from this they shall at length be delivered ; and the Jews themselves, we are told by some of their rabbies, expect it, and ground their expectation upon this promise, as Christians also do. See *Rem. xi.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**H A T an awful and majestic Being is the blessed God ! who hath all our comforts in his hand. All creatures are at his disposal ; he has the command of all diseases ; they are his servants. All nature, heaven, earth, air, rain, and beasts, and the hearts of men, are under his control. He can stir up enemies when he will. Men are his sword ; their spirits are under his influence ; who would not therefore fear him !

2. How great is the wisdom of those who practise religion, which makes this God our friend. He will have respect to those that keep his statutes and commandments ; he will favour and bless them ; *no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.*

3. We learn from hence, that good men, those who endeavour to promote religion in their country by their prayers, admonitions, and examples, are the best friends to it. We are not under an equal providence now, as the Jews were : there is therefore no arguing in our favour from their circumstances. But still *the Lord loveth righteousness ; and righteousness exalteth a nation.* We have reason to expect peculiar blessings from heaven, especially when we observe *his sabbaths, and reverence his sanctuary.*

4. We are here taught the great value of spiritual blessings above all others, and how happy those are who possess them : *God will be their God, and they shall be his people.* His soul will not abhor them. Let us ever desire God's word and ordinances ; remembering that his blessing is bestowed on a regular, orderly attendance on them. Let us esteem them more than all the blessings of the corn floor and the wine press, and be thankful that we have them in such abundance. *God hath not dealt so with many other nations. Praise ye the Lord.*

5. Let us be thankful that our nation is free from those desolating judgments which are here threatened. Ours is a fruitful land, wherein we dwell safely ; here are no wild beasts to break in and destroy. Yet God could soon break our staff of bread, turn our fertile soil into barrenness, and cause despised enemies to go through the land. But through divine goodness and patience our blessings are continued, though we are unworthy of them. Let us then adore his goodness, that *our land yields its increase, that he strengthens the bars of our gates, feeds us with the finest of the wheat, and suffers none to make us afraid. He giveth us all things richly to enjoy.* Let us therefore love and serve God, who *dealeth so bountifully with us.*

6. We learn, that in our private conduct we must not walk contrary to God. All sinners walk contrary to his nature, will,

and law ; especially those who sin presumptuously, or, after manifest rebukes of Providence. If, when visited with affliction, we despise God's chastisements, and are not awakened and reformed, but trespass yet more and more, he will punish us yet seven times more. God grant that all who have been, or still are, under his rod, may consider this, lest his strokes the next time should be heavier ; lest he send greater judgments, for he both can and will do it.

7. Let us pray that Israel may be taught, by the fulfilment of these threatenings, the evil of sin, which brought all their calamities upon them ; and that they may be brought to true repentance and conversion. Their sins were many and great ; but it was their crucifying Christ which filled up the measure of their iniquities : in consequence of which, they have remained longer in their present dispersed state than any *former captivity* ; yea, than all the time they continued in their own land. But when their *uncircumcised hearts shall be humbled to confess their iniquity*, their own obstinacy and unbelief, as well as the *iniquity of their fathers*, then, and not till then, can they reasonably expect the full accomplishment of the promises of their restoration, with which the chapter closes. May God hasten it in his own time ! And let our constant prayer for Israel be, *that they may be saved.*

CHAP. XXVII.

This chapter relates to vows, and to devoted things which were not to be redeemed.

- 1 **A**ND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto
- 2 the children of Israel, and say unto them, When a man shall make a singular vow, *that is, an extraordinary vow that he would devote himself to the service of God's sanctuary,* the persons [shall be] for the LORD, *set apart for his service, or else redeemed, by thy estimation, according to that value which the priest, by the direction here given, shall set upon them.*
- 3 And thy estimation shall be of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old, even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, or about
- 4 *five pounds fourteen shillings of our money.* And if [it be] a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels, *about three pounds eight shillings : it was less than for a man, because the labour and service of a man is usually worth more than of a*
- 5 *woman.* And if [it be] from five years old even unto twenty years old, then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, *or about two pounds five shillings,* and for the female
- 6 ten shekels, *about twenty two shillings.* And if [it be] from a month old even unto five years old, then thy estimation,

- shall be of the male five shekels of silver, *or twelve shillings and sixpence*, and for the female thy estimation [shall be] 7 three shekels of silver, *or seven shillings and sixpence*. And if [it be] from sixty years old and above ; if [it be] a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, *or one pound fourteen shillings*, and for the female ten shekels, *or one pound five shillings*. But if he be poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him : according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.*
- 9 And if [it be] a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD, all that [any man] giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy, *consecrated to God, either to be sacrificed, or given to the priest*. He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good : and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be 11 holy. And if [it be] any unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, then he shall present the 12 beast before the priest : And the priest shall value it, whether it be good or bad : as thou valuest it, [who art] the priest, so 13 shall it be.† But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth [part] thereof unto thy estimation.‡
- 14 And when a man shall sanctify his house [to be] holy unto the LORD, *shall appropriate the income of that house to the service of the sanctuary*, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad : as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it 15 stand. And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth [part] of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.
- 16 And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD [some part] of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof, *according to the quantity of seed it will take to sow it* : an homer of barley seed 17 [shall be valued] at fifty shekels of silver. If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand. But if he sanctify his field after the 18 jubilee, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the 19 jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation. And if he that sanctified the field, will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth [part] of the money of thy estimation 20 unto it, and it shall be assured to him. And if he will not

* These persons were probably the same as the Nethinims afterward ; the young men were hewers of wood and carriers of water ; the old men were employed in sweeping the floor, and carrying out ashes ; the women in making the priests' garments and repairing the covering of the tabernacle ; but lest too many should offer for this work, the price of their redemption was fixed, that no more might be retained than were necessary.

† That is, he was to leave it with the priest, or pay the value according to the priest's estimation.

‡ If he did this, it is plain that he thought it worth more than the priest put upon it ; and therefore a fifth part more might be thought to be the real value.

- redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man,
 21 it shall not be redeemed any more. But the field, when it
 goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the Lord, as a
 field devoted; the possession thereof shall be the priest's.
 22 And if [a man] sanctify unto the Lord a field which he
 hath bought, which [is] not of the fields of his possession, *but*
 23 *farmed by him till the jubilee*; Then the priest shall reckon
 unto him the worth of thy estimation, [even] unto the year of
 the jubilee: and he shall give thine estimation in that day,
 24 [as] a holy thing unto the Lord. In the year of the jubilee
 the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, [even]
 to him to whom the possession of the land [did belong] *by*
 25 *original right*.* And all thy estimations shall be according to
 the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.
 26 Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the
 Lord's firstling, no man shall sanctify it; whether [it be]
 ox, or sheep: it [is] the Lord's before, and therefore *would*
 27 *be offering with him*. And if [it be] of an unclean beast, *not fit*
for sacrifice, then he shall redeem [it] according to thine esti-
 mation, and shall add a fifth [part] of it thereto: or if it be
 not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy esti-
 mation.
 28 Notwithstanding no devoted thing; that a man shall devote
 unto the Lord of all that he hath, [both] of man and beast,
 and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed:
 29 every devoted thing [is] most holy unto the Lord.† None
 devoted, which shall be devoted of men, *by the flatricular di-*
rection of God, or agreeable to his law, shall be redeemed;
 [but] shall surely be put to death.‡
 30 And all the tithe of the land, [whether] of the seed of the
 land, [or] of the fruit of the tree, [is] the Lord's: [it is]
 holy unto the Lord, *consecrated to the service of God's sanc-*
 31 *tuary and the maintenance of the priests*. And if a man will
 at all redeem [ought] of his tithes, he shall add thereto the
 32 fifth [part] thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd,
 or of the flock [even] of whatsoever passeth under the rod §

* There is a considerable difficulty in this passage: it seems to me that if a man devoted a field, and did not redeem it at the year of jubilee, he was at liberty to redeem it afterward; but if this was a field that was mortgaged, it went to the original proprietor; the former possessor, who gave it, being only a tenant till the year of jubilee. I apprehend the priest could not have any other lands but what were settled by the law of God; but they might keep a devoted field, after the year of jubilee, till the price of redemption was paid.

† Every thing thus solemnly given to God, shall be perpetually employed in the service to which they are devoted. If land was thus devoted, it was absolutely given to the service of the sanctuary; if a man or slave, he was to be perpetually employed in the service of the sanctuary: such were the Nethinims; if a beast, it was to be sacrificed or put to death.

‡ This does not relate to what was devoted to a sacred use; but to persons devoted to destruction by a solemn cherem or curse, as the Canaanites by God's appointment; Jericho, and the idolatrous Israelites, *Exodus* xxii. 20. also the idolatrous cities, *Dent.* xiii. 15. those shall not be redeemed; no ransom shall be accepted; they shall surely be put to death, not on the altar, as a sacrifice, but by the sword, or the magistrate.

§ As the beasts of their own accord went out of the fold or cot, the tithing man, standing at the door, marked every tenth lamb or kid with a red coloured with ochre.

33 the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it : and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy ; it shall not be redeemed.

34 These [are] the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. **W**E learn hence the solemn nature of vows, and that we are not to trifle with God. Vows are solemn engagements to be the Lord's, or to do something for his cause. This chapter teaches us to be cautious not to make them rashly, lest we should repent. After vows are made, let us inquire, Have we been constant in keeping them, though sometimes to our hurt in temporal things ? Let us renew our resolutions for stricter fidelity to God ; be ready to do all the good we can, for his house and the offices thereof. It is proper to lay ourselves under solemn engagements to do so. This should often be done ; and having sworn, let us perform it. If we have hitherto neglected it, let us renew our resolutions with greater seriousness and care. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it : for he hath no pleasure in fools : pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it, that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. Eccles. v. 4, 5.*

2. We are taught from this chapter, and the whole book, to be thankful that *we are not under the law, but under grace ; that we are not come to mount Sinai, but are under an easier, milder, and more spiritual dispensation ; that the yoke of ceremonies is removed, which neither we nor our fathers could bear.* We may now, and we ought, to consecrate ourselves, our families, our fields, and all we have, to God. Ourselves, by presenting body and soul, a living sacrifice to God. Our families, by a solemn dedication of our children, and engaging our house to serve the Lord. Our fields and possessions, by *honouring the Lord with our substance*, cheerfully contributing to the support of his house, his ministers, and members. Every man should give as God hath prospered him. *To do good and to communicate, let us not forget, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

* This seems to refer to the whole book : many of the precepts are very important in their own nature, and necessary to be understood in order to explain several particulars in the gospel.

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